

# THE CASE AGAINST MORMONISM

VOLUME 3



Joseph Smith

**Jerald and Sandra Tanner**

# THE CASE AGAINST MORMONISM

## VOLUME 3

By Jerald and Sandra Tanner

1969  
(Digital version 2021)

Utah Lighthouse Ministry  
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## PREFACE

November 27, 1967, was a very important day for the Mormon people, for on that day the Metropolitan Museum of Art presented the Church with 11 fragments of papyri. This collection of papyri was once in the possession of Joseph Smith. Many people felt they had been destroyed in the Chicago fire in 1871.

The Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith claimed that the papyri were written by Abraham and Joseph in Egypt thousands of years ago. Joseph Smith “translated” some of the papyri and published it as the “Book of Abraham.” The Book of Abraham was accepted as scripture by the Mormon people and is now published in the *Pearl*

*of Great Price*—one of the four standard works of the Mormon Church. The Book of Abraham is very important to the Mormon people because it contains the “scriptural basis” for the anti-Negro doctrine of the Church.

Although we had a great deal to say about the Book of Abraham in Vol. 2 of *The Case Against Mormonism*, much still remains to be said concerning the papyri and their relationship to the Book of Abraham.

We are very indebted to James Wardle, LaMar Petersen, Wesley P. Walters, Grant Heward and Dee Jay Nelson for the help they have given us.

Bold type is used for emphasis throughout this book.

## 1. ABRAHAM'S DRAWINGS?

Many important things have happened since the Metropolitan Museum gave the fragments of papyrus to the Mormon Church. We devoted almost seventy pages to the Book of Abraham in Vol. 2 of *The Case Against Mormonism*, and yet we find that this is not sufficient to cover the matter.

In Vol. 2, pages 135-136 we quoted Dr. Nibley as making this statement concerning the discovery of the papyri: “. . . No Latter-day Saint was even aware of their existence until about two years ago. . . . If it had not been for Professor Aziz S. Atiya, we should still know nothing about the papyri; he is in a very real sense their discoverer.” On page 136 we proved that at least some of the Mormons were aware of the fact that the papyri were in existence prior to the time Dr. Atiya “discovered” them. We quoted this information from the book, *From the Dust of Decades*:

The Museum certainly kept an accurate file on the papyri and their origin, for in 1962 it was one of the authors of this book (Whipple) who wrote to the Museum in search of the papyri or information pertaining to parts of the Joseph Smith collection. He quickly received word that the Museum **did** have some papyri from the Smith collection. . . . They photographed the now famous original to facsimile No. 1 and sent it to his home in southern California. . . . **It was never a secret.** On a number of occasions he showed the slick photo to fireside and seminary groups throughout the southern California region, mentioning only that he had found it in an eastern museum . . . He later came to realize that the finding of the materials by Dr. Atiya, who is a **non-Mormon** and a known scholar, gave more meaning and better **publicity** to the discovery than would have been generated on the basis of the author's discovery. (*From the Dust of Decades*, pages 113-114)

We now have proof that Dr. Nibley himself was told that the papyri were still in existence about three years before Dr. Atiya made the “discovery” and that Nibley knew from another source that some of Joseph Smith's papyri had been located. A friend of Dr. Nibley's gave us this information in a letter dated August 13, 1968:

I saw photographs of them for the first time in 1963, I believe, . . . I wrote Nibley that some of the Joseph Smith papyri still existed but that I was not at liberty to say where, and he wrote me about the same time that someone in Utah had located a pile of unpublished Joseph Smith papyri.

This letter proves that Dr. Nibley was aware of the fact that some of Joseph Smith's papyri were still in existence years before Dr. Atiya made his “discovery.” It does not, however, prove that he knew the exact location of the papyri. In *The Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 2, page 135, we showed that Dr. Nibley had photographs of the papyri in his possession in 1966. In a letter dated June 27, 1967, however, Dr. Nibley claimed that he did not know where the original papyri were located. He stated:

I actually don't know where the original PGP Mss are, though I could find out easily enough; so far my ignorance has served me well. (Letter dated June 27, 1967)

Glen Wade states that on August 11, 1967, Dr. Nibley “indicated that he personally did not know their location or ownership but that he was quite certain of their preservation” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 67, page 54). It is certainly odd that Dr. Nibley would not know the location of the papyri at that time. Dr. Atiya was supposed to have discovered them in the spring of 1966, and they were turned over to the Church on November 27, 1967. Dr. Nibley apparently received photographs of the papyri right after the “discovery” for he had them in his possession in the “summer of 1966.”

Now that we know more of the facts concerning the discovery of the papyri, we see that Dr. Nibley's statement that “No Latter-day Saint was even aware of their existence” prior to the time Atiya discovered them is untrue. Walter Whipple had found them in 1962, and Dr. Nibley himself was told that the papyri were in existence about three years before the purported discovery, though he may not have known the exact location at that time. The statement that “he [Dr. Nibley] wrote me about the same time that someone in Utah had located a pile of unpublished Joseph Smith papyri” may refer to the fragments found in the Metropolitan Museum or it could be possible that more of Joseph Smith's collection has been located in another place. We know that the Mormon Church leaders had an actual piece of papyrus from Joseph Smith's collection which they suppressed for 130 years. We published a photograph of it in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* in 1966. An Egyptologist told us that he wrote to the Historian's Office and asked them if they had any of Joseph Smith's papyri. They replied that they did not. Finally, the

Mormon leaders were forced to admit that they did have a fragment of papyrus. On February 10, 1968, the LDS Church Section of the *Deseret News* announced that another fragment had been discovered:

An interesting development in the work going on at BYU by Dr. Hugh Nibley on the papyri fragments turned over to the Church by the New York Museum of Art is the locating of another fragment in the vaults at the Church Historian's office. . . .

The fragment is part of a collection the Church has regarding the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar prepared by the Prophet Joseph Smith. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, February 10, 1968, page 5)

In *The Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 2, page 138, we stated:

It is strange that the Mormon leaders had to wait for almost two years after we published a photograph of this fragment to announce their important "find."

The following explanation appeared in the *Improvement Era*:

Obviously, the significance of any item we store may not be known until something connected with it is uncovered, such as the papyri rediscovery, for example. The rediscovery of the papyri reminded us of the papyrus fragment that **we had all along** in the **CHO**. (*Improvement Era*, October 1968, page 38)

The Church Historian's Office may still be suppressing important information with regard to the Book of Abraham controversy. It is possible that they have more papyri, drawings of the papyri or other related material.

## Not an Egyptologist

As soon as the discovery of the papyri was announced, the Mormon leaders began to have trouble. Dr. Hugh Nibley admitted that "LDS scholars are **caught flat footed** by this discovery" (*Daily Universe*, Brigham Young University, December 1, 1967). He also stated that "the Mormons have to face the world **unprepared** after having been given a hundred years' fair warning" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, page 172).

Even though they were not prepared, the Mormon leaders decided to make an attempt at defending the authenticity of the Book of Abraham. They picked Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the Brigham Young University, to present the case for the Book of Abraham. Although Dr. Nibley has taken some classes in the Egyptian language, he was not qualified to translate the papyri. He admitted this in a letter dated just a few months before the discovery of the papyri was announced:

**I don't consider myself an Egyptologist at all, and don't intend to get involved in the P.G.P. business unless**

I am forced into it—which will probably be sooner than that. . . . As you know, this is a happy hunting-ground for crackpots, and not being certified in anything in particular I only rush in where fools fear to tread. . . . As you know, there are parties in Salt Lake who are howling for a showdown on the P. G. P.; . . . the nice thing about discussion is that one never knows where it is going to lead—that is why the experts are avoiding it as much as I am: . . . (Letter written by Dr. Hugh Nibley, dated June 27, 1967)

Even though Dr. Nibley claimed that he was not an Egyptologist and that he did not intend to get involved in the argument concerning the authenticity of the Book of Abraham, he allowed himself to become involved by writing articles for the *Improvement Era*, *Brigham Young University Studies*, and *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*. Within a year from the time he wrote the letter quoted above he was more deeply involved defending the Book of Abraham than anyone else in the Church. In the *Improvement Era*, February 1968, page 40, the editor stated that Dr. Hugh Nibley "has been assigned by the Church to direct the investigation and research being done on the material." In the January issue (page 19) we were assured that Dr. Nibley "is eminently qualified for the project he has undertaken. In the February issue of the same publication we were told that Dr. Nibley was going to unfold "the meaning of the hieroglyphics and illustrations on these valuable manuscripts." Many members of the Mormon Church felt that Dr. Nibley was the greatest Egyptologist in the world. In a letter to the editor of the *Deseret News* one Mormon wrote: "Today the papyri are in the hands of one of the **best qualified Egyptologists in the world**, Hugh Nibley, . . ." (*Deseret News*, December 27, 1967).

It did not take long to determine that Dr. Nibley was not "one of the best qualified Egyptologists in the world," for the first demonstration of his Egyptology at work turned out to be a failure. He combined the names of two separate people into one name, **Taimin Mutninesikhonsu** (see *The Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 2, pages 140-141). This mistake showed very plainly that Dr. Nibley was not "eminently qualified for the project" he had undertaken, and that he was not really prepared to unfold "the meaning of the hieroglyphics" as had been promised in the *Improvement Era*. Finally, Dr. Nibley had to publicly admit that he was not the great Egyptologist that many believed him to be. He stated:

This writer is **anything but an Egyptologist**, yet he has stood on the sidelines long enough to know that there is no case to be made out against the Book of Abraham on linguistic grounds for the simple reason that Joseph Smith did not commit himself beyond the interpretation of the Facsimiles. (*Improvement Era*, August 1968, page 56)

## A Rapid Retreat

From the very first day that the Metropolitan Museum presented the papyri to the Church, the Mormon leaders were willing to admit that the drawing which Joseph Smith used for Facsimile No. 1 in the Book of Abraham was among the manuscripts. They were unwilling to admit, however, that the fragment of papyrus from which Joseph Smith “translated” the text for the Book of Abraham itself was among the collection. In the *Salt Lake City Messenger*, March 1968, we pointed out that the fragment of papyrus which Dr. Nibley labeled “XI. Small ‘Sensen’ text (unillustrated) was the fragment Joseph Smith “translated” the Book of Abraham from. The evidence which we presented could not be refuted (see *The Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 2, pages 145-152). Dr. Nibley, therefore, finally admitted that the papyrus Joseph Smith used “in preparing the text of the Book of Abraham” had been located. Later he claimed that he had become aware of this fact “a day or two” after the publication of the papyri. He stated that it was a “very definite fact that, **one of the fragments seemed to supply all of the symbols for the Book of Abraham.** He went on to say that this “was the little ‘Sensen’ scroll.”

This fragment of papyrus has now been translated by three different Egyptologists, and they have all come to the conclusion that it is in reality an appendage to the Egyptian “Book of Breathings,” and has nothing to do with Abraham or his religion. Therefore, the Book of Abraham has been proven to be a spurious work (see our *Case*, Vol. 2, pages 159-160).

Dr. Nibley is now faced with a very serious problem. The February issue of the *Improvement Era* stated that he would unfold “the meaning of the hieroglyphics,” yet he cannot unfold the real meaning of the Sensen” text without discrediting the Book of Abraham. Therefore, Dr. Nibley has chosen to remain silent concerning the “Sensen” text and deal only with the Facsimiles found in the Book of Abraham. He states:

From the very beginning this writer has been **rightly** accused of an almost **callous unconcern for the newly located papyri** (all except the one matching Facsimile 1) as evidence for or against the authenticity of the Book of Abraham. . . . The drawings themselves are introduced as supplementary aids to the ancient reader, and were not necessarily inspired. . . . only the three facsimiles were published as ancient records directly relating to an inspired interpretation. Whatever use Joseph Smith may have made of the other manuscripts, whatever he may have thought or said or written about them, is not scripture and is not binding on anyone; nor can it be used as a test of his inspiration, in the following articles we are going to discuss **only the facsimiles** and the interpretation thereof, **passing by in silence** those writings which do not belong to the Book of Abraham, **even though that book may have been the end product of a process in which they had a part.** . . .

For those who wish to attack or defend the *Pearl of Great Price*, there is quite enough material contained in the facsimiles to keep things lively for sometime to come, without having to wrangle about hypothetical claims while the clear-cut claims of the facsimiles go unheeded. What are these clear-cut claims? One question embraces them all: Were the originals of these three facsimiles ever used anciently to explain or illustrate historic events or teachings going back to Abraham? If that can be answered in the affirmative the Book of Abraham is in the clear; if it can be answered in the negative—an emphatic negative—then it is discredited. Either solution depends upon an affirmative answer to an appalling preliminary question: Do you know **all there is to know** about these three documents? . . . He who knows not **all** things is ignorant of all things. (*Improvement Era*, November 1968, pages 36-40)

It appears that Dr. Nibley is unwilling to face the real issue with regard to this matter. He evidently wants us to forget that the papyrus Joseph Smith “translated” the Book of Abraham from has been located and judge the Book of Abraham by the Facsimiles. This suggestion is almost as ridiculous as his suggestion that we judge the Book of Abraham by its similarity to a number of old apocryphal writings. The Facsimiles are important, of course, and we do intend to deal with them, but we feel that the most important thing is that the original fragment which Joseph Smith used as the basis for the text of the Book of Abraham has been translated by Egyptologists and found to be nothing but an appendage to the “Book of Breathings.” What better evidence could there be than that furnished by the translation of the original text? To ignore this evidence, as Dr. Nibley suggests, is to ignore the truth entirely.

The members of The Society For Earthy Historic Archaeology at Brigham Young University evidently feel that the evidence concerning the “Sensen” fragment cannot be ignored, for they have printed an article in which the following statements appear:

In two different sections of the “Alphabet and Grammar,” hieratic symbols taken in order from the “Small Sen-Sen Fragment” (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968) have been juxtaposed to English symbols (i.e. words) comprising the text of the Book of Abraham (see Figs. 1 and 2). This correlation was pointed out by certain non-members of the Church shortly after the publication of photographs of the papyri. These same persons believed that the juxtaposition of small groups of hieratic symbols with English symbols in the “Alphabet and Grammar” implies a relationship of translation. At first sight, this appears to be a reasonable assumption. Four points of fact support it:

1. Joseph Smith, according to his own testimony, was working on a translation.
2. This translation was water published as the Book of Abraham, the text of part of which appears in English symbols or writing in the “Alphabet and Grammar.”
3. The Book of Abraham was supposedly being translated from the Egyptian papyri. Historical documentation found with the recently-acquired papyri prove that the “Small Sen-Sen Fragment” was among those used by Joseph Smith.

4. The “Small Sen-Sen Fragment” attaches to and follows (as described in Abraham 1:12-14) the papyrus fragment which depicts “Facsimile 1” (see Fig. 3).

This led to an objection on the part of the non-members: the size of the English text as opposed to that of the Egyptian text (i.e. the 25:1 ratio of the words) seems unbelievably high. Recently, Dee Jay Nelson, a member of the Church and a philologist of the Egyptian language, has accepted this view.

We should therefore reply to these objections if we wish to continue **to maintain that the Book of Abraham is scripture**, the more so because some **respected members** of the Church are beginning **to accept** the rationale behind the argument presented.

If the Book of Abraham is to be presented as authentic, there are two possible directions which can be taken:

A. We can simply discount the objection to the ratio of English to Egyptian symbols, which implies proving that the Book of Abraham text does indeed come from the Sen-Sen text.

B. We can show that there is a relationship between the juxtaposed symbols **other than that of translation**; we must find some other reason why Joseph Smith put them in juxtaposition.

As previously indicated, assumption “A” seems to be the more desirable, especially in the apparent absence of a reasonable substitute explanation for the juxtaposition. But this possibility appears to have been **ruled out** by the scholarly translations of the Sen-Sen text by Mr. Nelson, Dr. Richard A. Parker, and Dr. Klaus Baer, showing it to be a normal Egyptian funerary document.

Dr. Nibley, however, still seems to agree with us that possibility “A,” a relationship of translation, is the **more desirable explanation**, for in recent articles he places emphasis on the possibility of a “supercryptogram,” i.e. a deeper level of **hidden translation**. **But no one has yet suggested what such a supercryptogram might be.** . . .

Although it is true, as pointed out by the non-member critics, that the English text contains many principal words and ideas **not** reflected in the Egyptian hieratic symbols, we recognized some months ago certain cases in which the hieratic words are found in the corresponding English text.

There was clearly some connection, but its exact nature was not apparent. We theorized that perhaps each set of Egyptian symbols represented merely a “key word” which would bring to mind a certain **memorized** set of phrases, which was part of a longer **oral** tradition.

We propose, therefore, as a working hypothesis: either (1) that the Sen-Sen Papyrus was used as a **memory device** by Abraham (and perhaps by his descendants), each symbol or group of symbols bringing to mind a set number of **memorized phrases** relating to Abraham’s account of his life, or (2) that the hieratic words in the “Alphabet and Grammar” are simply related to core-concepts in the corresponding English story of Abraham. Either hypothesis requires that Joseph Smith had a working knowledge of the hieratic words on the papyrus. In the second case, **much of the English text may have been supplied by Joseph Smith** as an inspired commentary on the hieratic words.

Viewed in this light, the Book of Abraham seems **not to be a direct translation** of the Egyptian text appearing

on the Sen-Sen papyrus. Indeed, since the oral tradition itself would have long since disappeared with the death of Abraham or the last of his descendants acquainted with the story, the Book of Abraham would have had to be revealed to Joseph Smith, perhaps in connection with the use of the Egyptian symbols, inasmuch as the Prophet does relate **long English passages to single Egyptian words or short phrases**. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, October 25, 1968, pages 1-4)

The authors of this article have prepared a chart which they feel shows a relationship between the “Sensen” fragment and the text of the Book of Abraham. Most of their parallels are very weak. For instance, they note that an Egyptian word meaning “in” or “inside of” was used as the basis for Abraham 1:7b-10. Joseph Smith “translated” 122 words from this one Egyptian word. Because they find the word “in” among these words they feel that they have a parallel. We feel that it is just a coincidence, for Joseph Smith used the word “in” frequently in his Book of Abraham. In fact, it is found at least sixteen times in the first chapter of the Book of Abraham alone!

In our *Case*, Vol. 2, page 169, we pointed out that Joseph Smith “translated” most of Abraham 1:11 (59 words) from one Egyptian word meaning “the” or “this.” The authors of the article above admit that the Egyptian word means “this, the, (a specific thing),” but because the word “this” is found among the 59 word “translation,” they feel they have evidence that Joseph Smith understood the hieratic writing. They find the word “this” toward the beginning of verse 11: “Now *this* priest . . .” (previously mentioned).” Actually, we find the words “this” or “the” six times in this 59 word “translation.” They are used at least 130 times in the first chapter of the Book of Abraham. We feel that it would be unusual if they did not appear in the 59 word “translation.”

Perhaps the best parallel they are able to find is that Joseph Smith “translated” the words “who were the daughters of Haran” out of a “determinative for woman” (see our *Case*, Vol. 2, page 171).

The fact that the Society For Early Historic Archaeology at Brigham Young University would use this article in defense of the Book of Abraham reveals the weakness of their case.

## **From Book of Breathings**

Even though we can not accept Dr. Nibley’s suggestion that we ignore the “Sensen” text, we feel that a very good case could be made against the Book of Abraham on the basis of the Facsimiles alone. Facsimile No. 1, for instance, has now been identified as a part of the same scroll from which the “Sensen” text was taken. In other words, Facsimile No. 1 served as an illustration for the “Book of Breathings.” The Mormon Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson suggested that this was the case in his first booklet on the papyri:

This scene of Anubis embalming Osiris is often seen in copies of the Shait en Sensen, *Book of Breathings*. . . .

1. This fragment bears the original illustration from which the cut for Facsimile No. 1 *Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham was made. Its identification is undeniable.

2. The fragment is badly damaged.

3. This vignette is typical of scenes from the Shait en Sensen, *Book of Breathings*, showing Osiris lying dead upon his funeral bier in the process of being embalmed by the jackal-headed god, Anubis.

4. The illustration is of the type popular in the Ptolemaic Period after 332 B.C. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Salt Lake City, 1968, pages 42 and 44)

Klaus Baer, of the University of Chicago, has now proven beyond all doubt that this is part of the same scroll which contained the small “Sensen” papyrus that Joseph Smith used as the basis for the text of the Book of Abraham. He has shown that when the two fragments are placed together they match perfectly. On the next page is a photograph of these two fragments showing that they are part of the same scroll.

Klaus Baer makes this comment concerning the papyrus which has been identified as a copy of the *Book of Breathings*:

The handwriting is of the late Ptolemaic or early Roman Period, about the time of Christ. Joseph Smith thought that this papyrus contained the Book of Abraham. (*Dialogue: Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, page 111)

In footnote 11 of the same article, pages 111-112, Klaus Baer stated:

This identification is now certain. It was immediately evident that “Facsimile From the Book of Abraham No. 1 of the PGP was copied from P. JS I. The interpretation proposed by Joseph Smith for the first two lines of text in P. JS XI corresponds to Abraham 1:4-2:6, . . . The fact that the name of the owner is identical in both papyri, and that the left edge of the P. JS I appears to fit the right edge of P. JS XI (see n. 15)—that is, that they are parts of the same scroll—confirms this.

In footnote 15 on page 112, Klaus Baer states:

They seem to have **been cut apart after** being mounted. The edges match exactly in the photograph, and the pattern of vertical lines drawn on the backing about 2 cm. apart continues evenly from P. JS XI onto the left end of P. JS I when the two are placed in contact.

Just before his article was printed in *Dialogue*, Klaus Baer went to Brigham Young University and examined the original papyrus fragments. His work with the original manuscripts confirmed the research he had done with photographs of the papyri. In an addendum to his article he stated:

The reverse of the backings of both P. JS I and XI contain parts of the plan mentioned in n. 117, and they clearly adjoin as proposed in n. 15; matching upper and lower parts of handwriting are on the two pieces of paper with the cut going through the letters. The fiber patterns show that the papyri **were adjoining parts of the same scroll** and not simply mounted on adjoining pieces of paper. Papyrus fibers are always irregular and can be used (much like fingerprints) to check whether fragments come from the same sheet; in this case, the horizontal fibers on the left and right edges of P. JS I and XI, respectively, match exactly. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pages 133-134)

The text of the Book of Abraham itself shows that the drawing shown as Facsimile No. 1 was supposed to be at the beginning of the scroll. In Abraham 1:12 we read:

And it came to pass that the priests laid violence upon me, that they might slay me also, as they did those virgins upon this altar; and that you may have a knowledge of this altar, I will refer you to the representation at the commencement of this record.

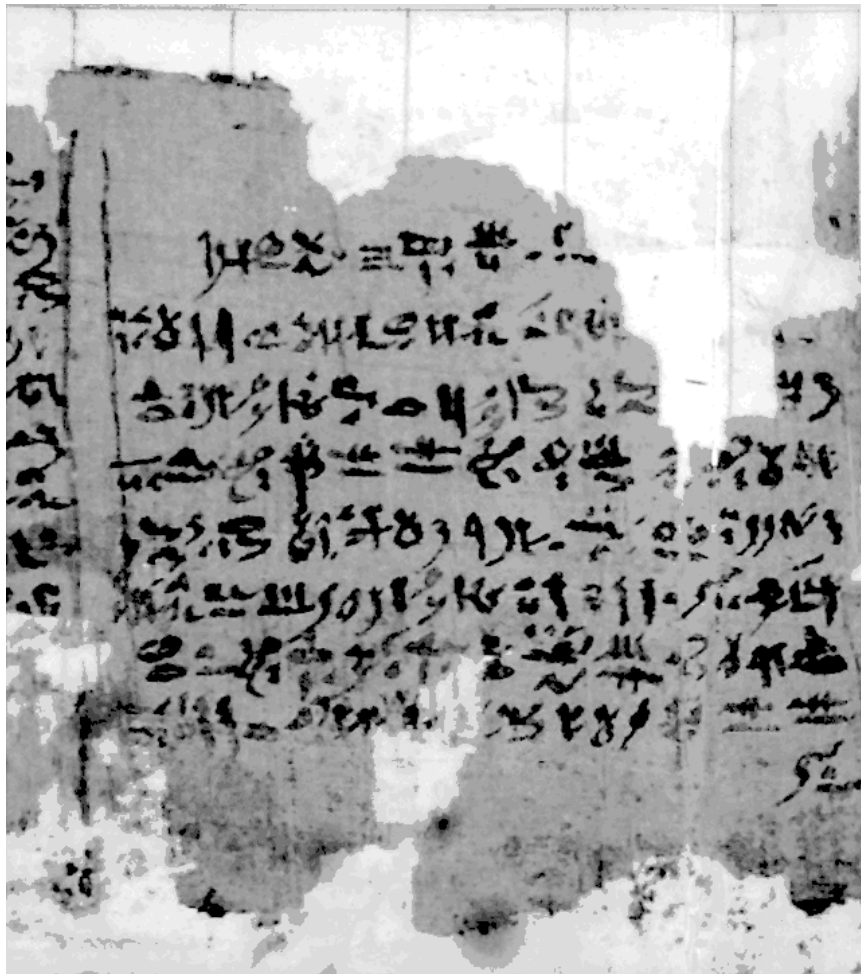
As we have shown in Vol. 2 of the *Case*, Joseph Smith was “translating” from the small “Sensen” text. Since he was working from right to left, the drawing would have to appear on the right side of the scroll to be at the “commencement of this record.” The illustration shown on the next page proves that the drawing was found on the right side of the “Sensen” text, which is consistent with the statement found in Abraham 1:12. It is also consistent with a statement in Abraham 1:14 which speaks of Facsimile No. 1 as being “at the beginning” of the record.

Klaus Baer carries the matter a “step further” and shows that the name Hor, which is found in the “Sensen” text and on the fragment Joseph Smith used for Facsimile No. 1, is also found on Facsimile No. 3. He states:

Even though Hor is a relatively common name in Greco-Roman Egypt, this does suggest that “Facsimile No. 3” reproduces a part of the same manuscript that “Facsimile No. 1” does. Hor’s copy of the *Breathing Permit* would then have had two vignettes, one at the beginning and another (“Facsimile No. 3”) at the end, an arrangement that is found in other copies of the same text. . . . a comparison with the photograph shows that “Facsimile No. 1” was originally printed actual size, so the fact the “Facsimiles Nos. 1 and 3” are about the same height may well be significant. It is what would be expected if they came from the same scroll. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, page 127)

Klaus Baer reads the name Hor from the hieroglyphs that appear at the bottom of the scene shown in Facsimile No. 3. These hieroglyphs are very unclear in modern editions of the *Pearl of Great Price*, but in the first printing which appeared in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842 they are readable. Klaus Baer states:





Small Sensen Text



Original of Facsimile No. 1

This illustration shows that the small "Sensen" text, which Joseph Smith used as the basis for the text in the Book of Abraham, joins with the fragment from which Facsimile No. 1 was drawn.

I have used xerox copies of the engravings of "Facsimile No. 1" and "No. 3" as printed in *Times and Seasons*, 3, No. 9 (March 1, 1842), 1;3, No. 14 (May 16, 1842), 1. The cuts that appear in modern, cheap editions of the *PGP* have lost too much detail to be of use and appear to have been touched up slightly. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, page 126, footnote 106)

A careful examination of the first printing of Facsimile No. 3 as it appears in the *Times and Seasons* shows that Klaus Baer is probably correct in reading the name "Hor" from the hieroglyphs at the bottom of this Facsimile. Below is a photograph of Facsimile No. 3 from the *Times and Seasons*. The reader will notice that we have clarified the hieroglyphs below the area where the name appears.

The reader may wonder how the picture of a bird could represent the name of a man. Actually, this bird is a representation of "the falcon-god Horus" (*Egyptian Grammar*, by Alan Gardiner, 1964, page 582). The name "Horus" appears frequently in the Book of the Dead. Below the *Times and Seasons* photograph is an example from *The Egyptian Book of the Dead, (The Papyrus of Ani) Egyptian Text Transliteration and Translation*, by E. A. Wallis Budge, New York, 1967, page 17.

Although Egyptologists know that this falcon represents an Egyptian god, there has been some question as to how the name should be read. E. A. Wallis Budge gives this information:

Or, take the name of the god Horus, which the Egyptians wrote Her . . . the missing vowel is *ō*, but the Egyptian forms of the name give no indication of this fact. . . . according to M. Naville's view, which is probably correct, . . . we ought to read "Hur," or "Hor," . . . (*An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, Vol. 1, Introduction, page lviii)

James Henry Breasted seems to prefer the reading "Hor":

As falcon he bore the name Hor (Horus or Horos), or Harakhte, which means "Horus of the horizon." (*Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, New York, 1959, page 9)

When naming their children the Egyptians often used the names of their gods. The man mentioned in the Mormon Papyri was named after the god Horus. This was a common name toward the end of ancient Egyptian history. The Egyptologists who have translated Joseph Smith's Papyri prefer to render the name "Hor," but they realize that it is the name of the god Horus. Klaus Baer makes this statement concerning the name Hor:

The name means "[the god] Horus." (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, footnote 8, page 111)

Now that we know that the name "Hor" is the same as "Horus," we find that the Egyptologist M. Theodule Deveria correctly identified the name on Facsimile No. 3 more than a hundred years ago! He stated:



**TIMES AND SEASONS.**  
"Truth will prevail."  
Vol. III, No. 14. CITY OF NAUVOO, ILL. MAY 16, 1842. [Whole No. 20]  
A FACSIMILE FROM THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM.  
NO. 3.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

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5. The deceased led by Ma into the presence of Osiris. His name is **Horus**, as may be seen in the prayer which is at the **bottom of the picture**, and which is addressed to the divinities of the four cardinal points. (*A Journey to Great Salt Lake City*, Vol. 2, as quoted in *Deseret News*, January 4, 1913)

It has been pointed out that Prof. Seyffarth also believed that the papyrus roll was written for a man by the name of Horus. The St. Louis Museum, which had some of Joseph Smith's mummies, published a catalogue in 1859. In this catalogue the following statement appeared:

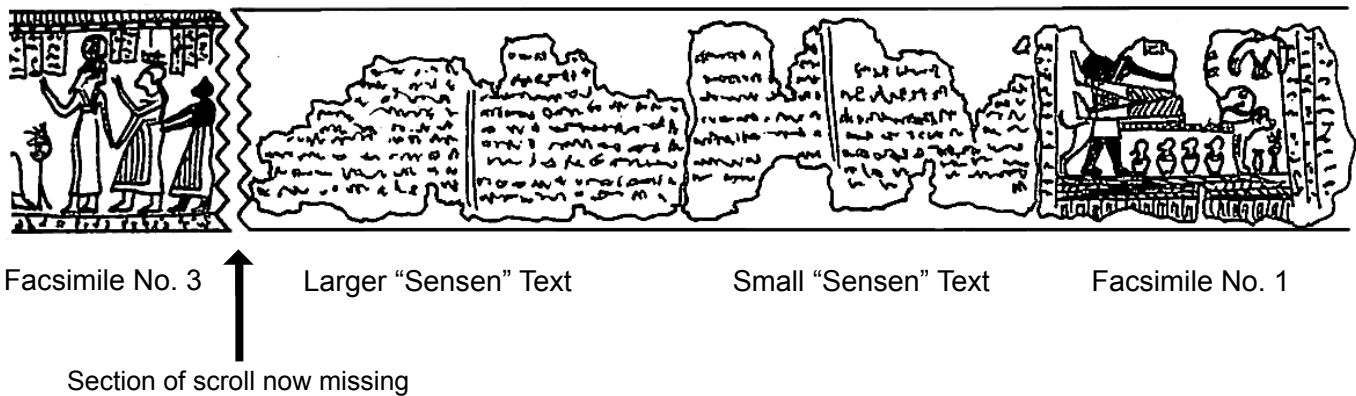
These Mummies were obtained in the Catacombs of Egypt, . . . forwarded to New York, and there purchased, in the year 1835, by Joe Smith, . . . according to Prof. Seyffarth, the papyrus roll is not a record, but an invocation to the Deity Osiris, in which occurs the name of the person, (**Horus**) and a picture of the attendant spirits, introducing the dead to the Judge, Osiris.

(*Catalogue of the St. Louis Museum*, 1859, page 45, as quoted in *The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, by James R. Clark, page 159)

Although there seems to be some question as to whether Seyffarth saw the original papyrus or just the printed copies, the name Horus is correct. The statement that the picture shows the attendant spirits "introducing the dead to the Judge, Osiris," seems to be referring to the scene shown in Facsimile No. 3.

Facsimile No. 2 was probably not part of the papyrus roll written for the "Osiris Hor"; nevertheless, Joseph Smith added writing from the "Sensen" fragment onto Facsimile No. 2. Among the words which he added we find the Egyptian words which mean "Book of Breathings." We will have more to say about this in the next chapter.

Below is a rough sketch of how the papyrus roll probably fits together.



## 2. FACSIMILE NO. 2

Facsimile No. 2 in the Book of Abraham is a round disk which is supposed to relate to Abraham and his religion. We will deal with this Facsimile first because it furnishes evidence which is important in the study of

Facsimile No. 1. Below is a photograph of Facsimile No. 2, as it appears in the *Pearl of Great Price*, together with Joseph Smith's interpretation.

A FACSIMILE FROM THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM

No. 2.



### EXPLANATION OF THE FOREGOING CUT

Fig. 1. Kolob, signifying the first creation, nearest to the celestial, or the residence of God. First in government, the last pertaining to the measurement of time. The measurement according to celestial time, which celestial time signifies one day to a cubit. One day in Kolob is equal to a thousand years according to the measurement of this earth, which is called by the Egyptians Jah-oh-eh.

Fig. 2. Stands next to Kolob, called by the Egyptians Olbliah, which is the next grand governing creation near to the celestial or the place where God resides; holding the key of power also, pertaining to other planets; as revealed from God to Abraham, as he offered sacrifice upon an altar, which he had built unto the Lord.

Fig. 3. Is made to represent God, sitting upon his throne, clothed with power and authority; with a crown of eternal light upon his head; representing also the grand Key-words of the Holy Priesthood, as revealed to Adam in the Garden of Eden, as also to Seth, Noah, Melchisedek, Abraham, and all to whom the Priesthood was revealed.

Fig. 4. Answers to the Hebrew word Raukeyang, signifying expanse, or the firmament of the heavens; also a numerical figure, in Egyptian signifying one thousand; answering to the measuring of the time of Olbliah, which is equal with Kolob in its revolution and in its measuring of time.

Fig. 5. Is called in Egyptian Eniah-go-on-dah; this is one of the governing planets also, and is said by the Egyptians to be the Sun, and to borrow its light from Kolob through the medium of Kao-e-vanrash, which is the grand Key, or, in other words, the governing power, which governs fifteen other fixed planets or stars, as also Floese or the Moon, the Earth and the Sun in their annual revolutions. This planet receives its power through the medium of Kii-foe-is-on, or Hah-ho-tan-beam, the stars represented by numbers 22 and 23, receiving light from the revolutions of Kolob.

Fig. 6. Represents this earth in its four quarters.

Fig. 7. Represents God sitting upon his throne, revealing through the heavens the grand Key-words of the Priesthood; as, also, the sign of the Holy Ghost unto Abraham, in the form of a dove.

Fig. 8. Contains writing that cannot be revealed unto the world; but is to be had in the Holy Temple of God.

Fig. 9. Ought not to be revealed at the present time.

Fig. 10. Also.

Fig. 11. Also. If the world can find out these numbers, so let it be. Amen.

Figures 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18; 19; and 20, will be given in the own due time of the Lord.

The above translation is given as far as we have any right to give at the present time.

Egyptologists have always claimed that this is a hypocephalus—a disk placed under the head of the mummy. Their argument is very convincing because there are several hypocephali which are almost identical to the facsimile in the *Pearl of Great Price*.

On the following pages we show a number of hypocephali that are similar to the one found in the *Pearl of Great Price*. Dr. Albert M. Lythgoe, who was Curator of the Egyptian Department of the Metropolitan Museum, made this statement concerning Facsimile No. 2:

The third piece of writing published with the Mormon "Pearl of Great Price" was on a circular disk, and this disk Dr. Lythgoe went over carefully.

"Egyptian scholars give this particular disk a name," he said, "they call it a 'hypocephalus,' which means literally 'under the head.' Like the length of garment on the figures and the kind of lids on the stone jars this disk shows that the Mormons gained possession of a mummy and papyrus from the comparatively late Egyptian period. During our work in Egypt last Winter we obtained some of those disks that were nothing but slabs of Nile mud.

"Here is a disk of exactly the same sort," Dr. Lythgoe remarked, as he turned to a volume on Egyptian religion by Adolf Erman.

On page 188 of this volume a drawing was found of a circular disk, which was almost exactly a duplicate of the disk from which the Mormon prophet took a record of



A photograph of Facsimile No. 2 as it was first published in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842. This, of course, is the Mormon Hypocephalus. We will use the letter "M" when referring to it in the study which follows.



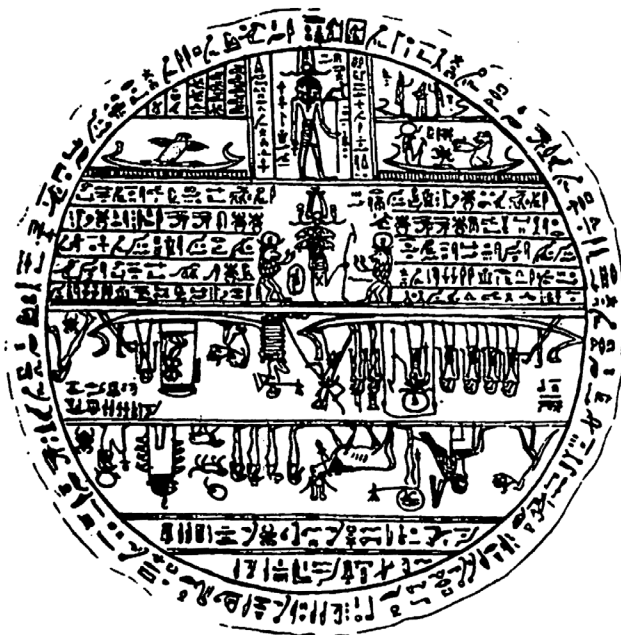
EXAMPLE 1

A photograph of a hypocephalus which is in the Berlin Museum. This photograph was published in the *New York Times*, December 29, 1912.



EXAMPLE 2

A photograph of a hypocephalus "inscribed on a bronze plate." This photograph is published in *Joseph Smith as a Translator*, by R. C. Webb, Salt Lake City, 1936, page 130.



EXAMPLE 3

R. C. Webb refers to this as "British Hypocephalus, No. 1." It is published on page 165 of *Joseph Smith as a Translator*.



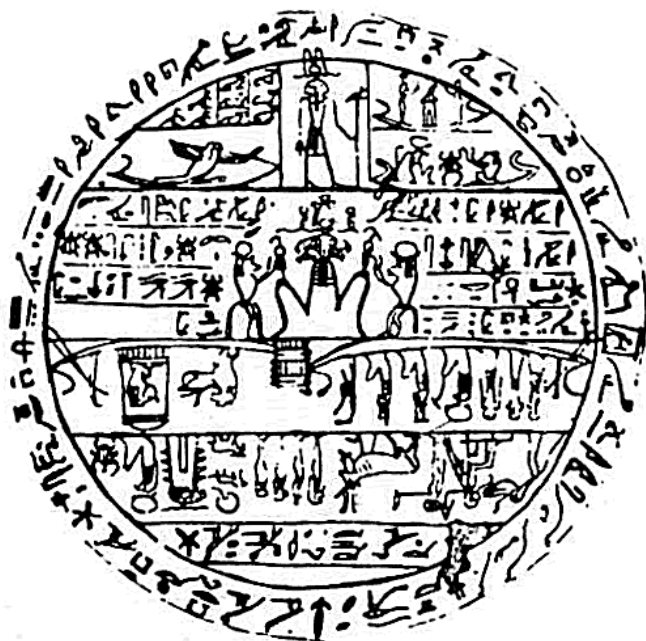
EXAMPLE 4

R. C. Webb calls this "The Paris Hypocephalus." It is found on page 173 of *Joseph Smith as a Translator*.



EXAMPLE 5

R. C. Webb calls this "British Hypocephalus, No. 2." It is found on page 175 of *Joseph Smith as a Translator*.



EXAMPLE 6

R. C. Webb refers to this as "British Hypocephalus No. 3." It is found on page 177 of *Joseph Smith as a Translator*.



EXAMPLE 7

R. C. Webb calls this "The Leyden Hypocephalus." It is found on page 179 of *Joseph Smith as a Translator*.

NOTE:— The reader will notice that six of our examples of hypocephali come from the book, *Joseph Smith as a Translator*, by R. C. Webb. This book was printed in 1936 by the Mormon publishing company "Deseret News Press." Although one area on some of the photographs appears to have been "doctored" (we will have more to say about this later), they are generally good reproductions.

Abraham in the act of receiving God's word. (*New York Times*, Magazine Section, Part Five, Sunday, December 29, 1912)

Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the Brigham Young University, states that there "are only about a hundred" hypocephali known today (Speech given by Dr. Nibley at the University of Utah, May 20, 1968). The Mormon writer George Reynolds tried to explain the presence of the other disks by stating:

It has been urged as an argument against the veracity of the translation by the Prophet Joseph Smith, of the circular cut or disc, but why, we cannot comprehend, that numerous copies of it exist, scattered among the museums of Europe. These copies have been found buried with mummies in the same way as the one that fell into the Prophet's hands. Instead of being an argument against the truthfulness of the translation given by Joseph Smith, we consider it a very strong one in its favor. For this reason, Egyptologists acknowledge that some peculiar potency was ascribed to it by the ancient Egyptians, but their ideas are very vague as to in what that power consisted. . . . Accompanying the mummy is also often found this sacred disc, or hypociphas, as the learned term it, which, if we mistake not, was usually placed under or near the head of the mummy. The translations given by the professedly learned convey no idea why this was so placed, but the revelation through our martyred Prophet, that it contains the key words of the holy priesthood, at once makes the reason plain. The Egyptians buried this disc containing these sacred words with their dead, for very much the same reason that the Saints bury their dead in the robes of the holy priesthood. No doubt the true meaning of these key words were soon lost from amongst the Egyptians, but they knew enough to understand something of their value, and as ages rolled on, their apostate priesthood doubtlessly invented some myth to take their place. (*Are We of Israel? and The Book of Abraham*, Salt Lake City, 1931, pages 94-95)

R. C. Webb, who defended the Mormon Church, admitted that Facsimile No. 2 was similar to other hypocephali:

It is, in fact, one of the disks found occasionally beneath the head of a mummy, and for that reason called a "hypocephalus" (i.e., "underhead"). Only a few dozen such disks are known, but most of them are similar in leading features to the one before us, as we shall see; although there are minor variations and a few additional figures in some of them. So far as the inscriptions are legible, they seem to contain funerary texts and formulae, in association with figures evidently highly symbolic. (*Joseph Smith as a Translator*, by R. C. Webb, Salt Lake City, 1936, page 154)

## Falsification Proven

For over a hundred years Egyptologists have claimed that the Facsimiles in the Book of Abraham were altered before publication. Deveria was probably the first Egyptologist to charge that the Mormons had altered the Facsimiles. He stated:

It is evident to me that several of the figures to be found in these various manuscripts have been intentionally altered. (*A Journey to Great Salt Lake*, Vol. 2, as quoted in *Deseret News*, January 4, 1913, page 4)

In rebuttal to Deveria's charge, George Reynolds made this statement:

. . . what earthly reason there could be for the "Mormons" attempting to alter them, is beyond our comprehension. (*Are We of Israel? and The Book of Abraham*, page 131)

R. C. Webb made this statement concerning Facsimile No. 2:

The first point that must impress one, in beginning an examination of this plate, is that it differs from other documents with which it is classed in several notable particulars. Among these may be mentioned the two faces, instead of the customary four, shown on the central seated figure (1), the unique design of the boat and its occupant (3) — most hypocephali have two boats shown here, the boat of the soul and the boat of Ra, the one above the other, in separate panels—and the entirely exceptional appearance of the "dove" figure in group 7. These departures, from the usual cannot be made to argue modern changes for obscure reasons, apparently, since they represent no greater variations than are found among other documents of the kind. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 17, no. 4, February 1914, page 328)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made this statement:

As to purposely changing the figures or altering the text, that is out of the question, since that would have subjected the prophet to detection and exposure, as after the facsimiles and the Book of Abraham were both published, the mummies, . . . and the papyri, were on exhibition . . . It is not, therefore, likely that Joseph Smith or his associates would designedly change any of the figures in their copy of these documents and run such risk of detection and exposure. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, February 1913, page 314)

When Prof. Edgar J. Banks charged that Joseph Smith had altered the drawings, Sterling B. Talmage replied:

... this author shows his lack of careful study by boldly asserting, on no authority but his own, that Joseph Smith has "altered the drawings to suit his purpose," an accusation that has not been made before, on account of its palpable absurdity. Poor drawing has been charged, even to the extent of rendering some characters illegible. All this is admitted, for they were almost surely copied by one who knew nothing of the principles of Egyptian writing, but intentional alteration is a new accusation. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, May, 1913, page 771)

R. C. Webb made this comment concerning one of the Facsimiles:

We have noted that, without exception, we have heard, not what this plate depicts, but rather what it might be supposed to depict, if sundry changes should be made. Nor have we seen any definite suggestion as to who could have altered the scene from its presumed original form; whether this alleged alteration was done anciently, or in recent times, and, most important of all, what imaginable object could be predicated to account for it. And, as we may conclude from this showing, if this is all that Egyptological learning can do for us, it is capable of making no real contribution to our knowledge in the premises. (*Joseph Smith as a Translator*, page 131)

On page 158 of the same book, R. C. Webb stated:

And, as we have found, there are grave difficulties in the way of demonstrating the traditional captions erroneous, or even of justifying the oft-repeated allegation that the drawings have been altered, modernly, at least, to correspond to the proffered descriptions.

On pages 169-170 R. C. Webb made these statements:

All these departures from the usual might be attributed to the activity of some one in altering the figure as we have it. Indeed, so far as the figure in Panel 3 is concerned, this charge of "alteration" was actually made by Dr. Deveria. But here, as in other connections, none of the accusers has been able to indicate reasons why they should have been made, or any evident advantage to the traditional captions involved in making them.

Now that some of the original papyri have been located we have definite proof that the drawings in the Book of Abraham have been altered and that they cannot be relied upon. The evidence of falsification is irrefutable.

Although the original hypocephalus from which the Mormons copied Facsimile No. 2 has not been located, the papyri that have been found prove that the drawing which appears in the *Pearl of Great Price*, has been falsified. Evidently the original hypocephalus which Joseph Smith had was damaged. Portions of it were either unreadable or they had fallen away. When the Mormons made the woodcut for Facsimile No. 2, they falsely inserted writing from the papyri which was not on the hypocephalus. The fact that part of the hypocephalus was either missing or

damaged is proven by a drawing which appears in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. This drawing was suppressed for 130 years. The reader will find a photograph of this drawing in Example No. 1 on the next page. Notice the missing areas on this drawing.

In Example No. 2 on the next page the reader will find a photograph of Facsimile No. 2, as it was first published in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842. Notice that the missing areas have been filled in.

In the study which follows we will use photographs of Facsimile No. 2 as it was first published in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842. It is important that we do this because there have been many additional changes made since 1842. Dr. James R. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, makes this statement concerning this matter:

It is necessary to raise a caution against using any printing of these facsimiles except that prepared by Joseph Smith. Later plates made of these cuts or facsimiles show some marked changes in the form and completeness of the symbols. Failure to use these original printings has been a serious weakness of all subsequent criticisms of Joseph Smith as a translator. To the investigator's knowledge there has never been an appraisal of Joseph Smith's ability as a translator which has been based on these original printings done under his personal supervision, by any scholar or linguist, and subsequent printings that have been used in such criticism can be demonstrated to be defective printings. (*Progress in Archaeology*, BYU Archaeological Society Pub., 1963, page 30)

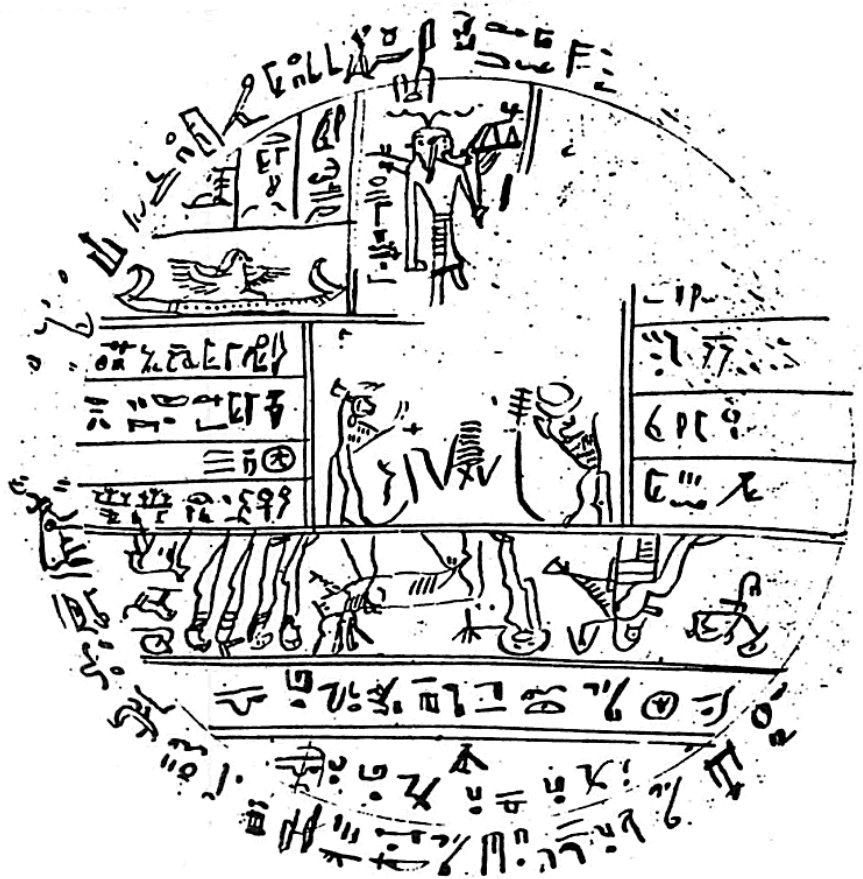
Mormon writers have criticized F. S. Spalding for using the 1907 printing of the *Pearl of Great Price*, instead of the 1842 printing in the *Times and Seasons*. James R. Clark stated:

An additional damaging reflection on Bishop Spalding's "competent" investigation is the demonstrable fact that the fac-similes that Bishop Spalding used contained printer's errors. If he was so competent or if his scholars were competent, why did they not bother to even know that the 1842 printing of the fac-similes done under Joseph Smith's personal supervision are far more accurate than the 1907 printing which he submitted to his "world's greatest Egyptologists." (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, pages 59- 61)

We would think that the Mormon leaders would have the best and most accurate copies of the Facsimiles in modern editions of the *Pearl of Great Price*, but such is not the case. Dr. Nibley himself has stated:

The Facsimiles now in use are extremely bad reproductions, far inferior to the first engravings published in 1842. Am I, then, as a member of the Church bound to consult the present official edition and that only, and regard it as flawless, bad as it is, because it is the official publication of the Church? (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, page 177)

EXAMPLE NO. 1— A drawing of the Mormon Hypocephalus which appears in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. This drawing was suppressed for 130 years. Notice the missing areas on the drawing.



EXAMPLE NO. 2—A photograph of Facsimile No. 2 as it was first published in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842. Notice that the areas that are blank in the drawing above have been filled in.

Dr. Nibley also stated:

When we come to discuss the Facsimiles one by one, we shall have occasion to note what drastic alterations they have suffered through the years at the hands of their various copyists. (*Improvement Era*, April 1968, page 65)

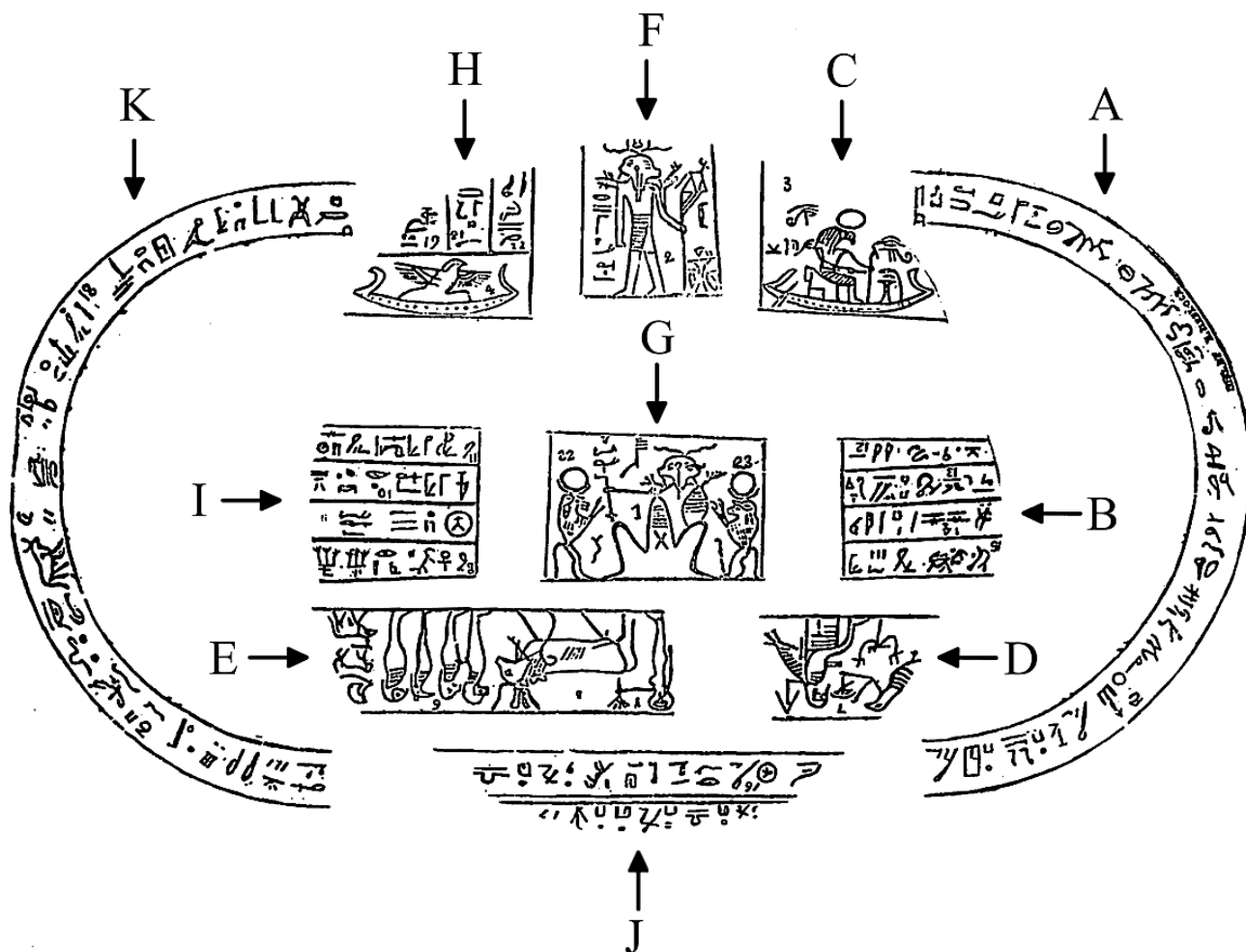
Dr. Nibley is making quite an admission! Keith Terry and Walter Whipple also admit that there have been changes in the Facsimiles:

All that the "experts" had were the facsimiles that Reuben Hedlock had made from woodcut plates on

which over the years careless changes occurred in later editions of the book. (*From the Dust of Decades*, page 102)

From the information given above the reader will see that it is important that we use photographs from the 1842 printing of the Facsimiles.

In order to make a detailed study of Facsimile No. 2 it is necessary that we dissect it into several parts and assign a letter to each part. Below the reader will find a photograph of Facsimile No. 2 which we have dissected and labeled for this study.





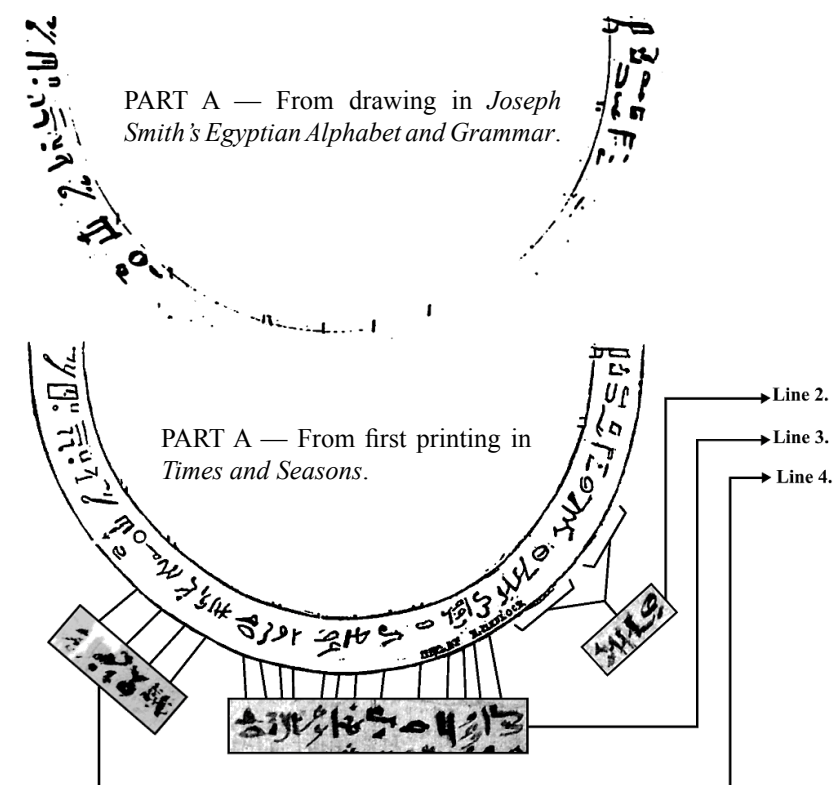
## Part A

Grant Heward has been convinced for some time that Facsimile No. 2 contains portions that have been falsified. He finally came to the conclusion that the damaged or missing areas around the edge of Facsimile No. 2 had been filled in with hieratic characters. (The hypocephalus is supposed to be written in hieroglyphic characters.) Working on this theory he made an astounding discovery. He found that the characters had been copied from the same piece of papyrus Joseph Smith used as a basis for the text of the Book of Abraham.

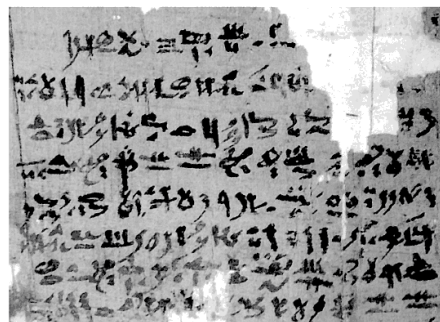
Below is a photograph of the right side of Facsimile No. 2 as it appears in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet*

and *Grammar*. Below this is a photograph of Part A from the *Times and Seasons*. Notice that the missing areas have been filled in with characters from the fragment of papyrus Dr. Nibley labeled "XI. Small 'Sensen' text (unillustrated)." One group of characters from line two of the "Sensen" fragment was copied twice along the edge of Facsimile No. 2. The characters which follow were taken from line 3. The remaining characters were probably taken from line 4, but they are poorly copied.

The characters which were used to fill in the blank area were added in upside down, so that they read the opposite direction to the rest of the text.



A photograph of the right side of the papyrus fragment identified in the *Improvement Era*, February 1968, as "XI. Small 'Sensen' text (unillustrated)." Joseph Smith used this as the basis for the Book of Abraham.



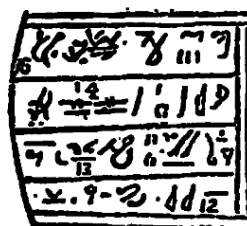
## Part B

At the time Grant Heward was making his discovery concerning the characters that were inserted around the outer edge, we were examining the hypocephalus and found the word "sensen" written in Figure 14. A more careful check revealed that the entire name of the "Book of Breathings" had been written in Figures 14 and 15. These characters were taken from the fourth line of the fragment which has been identified as the one used for the Book of Abraham text. The remaining part of the fourth line is written in Figure 13. Other characters have been added in Figure 12. We do not know exactly where these characters were taken from, but Wesley Walters has found them written at the bottom of the same sheet of paper that contains the piece

of papyrus which was included in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. These characters also appear to be written in hieratic. The characters which are added in Figures 12-15 are written in the areas that were damaged or missing on the original disk. At the top of the next page is a comparison of this portion of the drawing as it appeared in the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" (to the left) with the way it appeared in the *Times and Seasons* (to the right). We have turned Part B upside down, so that the number 12-15 are facing up. When we do this, however, it makes the hieroglyphics upside down. The hieratic writing is added in the right side up to the numbers, but upside down to the hieroglyphic writing.



"Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar"



Times and Seasons

In the photograph below we have dissected Figures 13-15 and placed them in a line so that we can compare them with characters from the fourth line of the fragment of papyrus which has been identified as the source of the Book of Abraham.



The Egyptologist M. Theodule Deveria examined these lines and made this comment:

12-15. Four lines of writing similar to the former, of which they are the pendant. They appear to be numbered upside-down, and are illegibly copied. (*A Journey to Great Salt Lake City*, Vol. 2, as quoted in *Deseret News*, January 4, 1913)

Now that we know the truth about these lines it is easy to understand why Deveria was unable to read them. Who would suspect the lines are part hieratic writing and part hieroglyphic writing and that the hieratic has been added in upside down to the hieroglyphic?

Dr. Hugh Nibley is willing to admit that changes were made in the Facsimiles after Joseph Smith's death. In fact, he goes so far as to state:

... we shall have occasion to note what **drastic alterations** they have suffered through the years at the hands of their various copyists. ... It is as if the Mormons had felt that these drawings, since they are mere symbols anyway, may be copied **pretty much as one pleases**. (*Improvement Era*, April 1968, page 65)

Nevertheless, he is unwilling to admit that the 1842 printing of the Facsimiles contained falsifications. In the face of documented proof that Facsimile No. 2 has been falsified, Dr. Nibley states:

Then too, we must recognize that there are sections of hieroglyphic text in Facsimile 2 that present-day Egyptologists read without too much trouble: since these

legible portions are found to be correct and conventional Egyptian, it is perfectly plain that nobody has **falsified or jumbled them**, as was charted. That is to say, whenever the text can be checked, **everything is found to be in order**. (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, page 74)

We feel that Dr. Nibley is deliberately misrepresenting the facts with regard to this matter. The Mormon Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson states:

It is highly interesting that the third part of the circular inscription (Fig. 18) on the printed copies of this cut, which exactly corresponds with the missing part of that inscription on the Valuable Discovery drawing, is not hieroglyphic bookhand at all but is hieratic copied by Joseph Smith or an associate from lines 2, 3, and 4, column 1 of the Hor Sensen Papyrus Fragment No. 1, (small unillustrated). Mr. Jerald Tanner and Grant Heward have **correctly established this fact** in an article written for the Summer, 1968, issue of *Dialogue* (page 97). The alien nature of this fraction of the inscription coinciding precisely with the missing part in Joseph Smith's Ink Drawing makes the credulity of this section highly suspect. (*Joseph Smith's "Eye of Ra,"* Salt Lake City, 1968, page 5)

On pages 22-25 of the same book, Mr. Nelson states:

An article entitled "The Source of the Book of Abraham Identified" by Grant S. Heward and Jerald Tanner which appeared in the summer issue of *Dialogue* (page 92), pointed out that several hieratic passages from the Hor Sensen Papyrus had been copied onto the right hand portion of Facsimile No. 2 which appears in printed editions of the Book of Abraham. ... It also demonstrated in an excellent illustration that part of line 4 of column 1 on the same Hor Sensen Fragment had been copied onto the right hand ends of each of those three horizontal lines which are designated on Facsimile No. 2 as Figs. 13, 14 and 15. I critically examined these claims and found that they **were absolutely correct** ...

Over the past 20 years I have made it my business to visit every museum and private collection where I have learned that hypocephali were to be seen. ... The very nature of hypocephali insists that they be inscribed only with hieroglyphic characters, so to find hieratic upon the Book of Abraham example is remarkable. I am convinced that hieratic **did not appear upon the original** ancient article because those areas upon which this type of script is written precisely agree with those

areas which have been left blank on the hypocephalus ink drawing . . . The places where the hieroglyphic writing ends and hieratic begins on printed copies of Facsimile No. 2 are precisely the same as the places where the hieroglyphic writing ends and blank spaces appear on the *Valuable Discovery Notebook* drawing. I believe that Joseph Smith, Mr. Reuben Hedlock (the engraver) or one of Smith's associates copied the characters from the Hor Papyrus onto the woodcut master to fill the areas which were damaged and unreadable on the original hypocephalus. These amulets are very fragile and subject to damage. It is not my place to comment upon the reasons for these unnatural additions to the otherwise normal hieroglyphic texts, but I can supply additional evidence that it was done by the Church fathers in the early 1840s. If the hieratic characters had been written upon the hypocephalus in ancient Egypt they would have conformed with the normal progression of writing used at that time. As they appear on Facsimile No. 2 they do not. For instance, the encircling text . . . begins in hieroglyphic characters at the top of the illustration (above the head of the standing figure) and progresses in a natural counterclockwise direction. A completely normal message unfolds as one reads until he arrives at a position on the circumference which corresponds with 5 o'clock. From here on the characters are hieratic. They do not simply change from one script to another, but the orientation is confused. The hieratic progresses from a position which might be described as 1 o'clock toward and ending at 5 o'clock. What is even more confounding is that the natural hieroglyphic characters face toward the right and stand with their bases just above the innermost of the two circles, but the hieratic characters have their bases peculiarly outward. . . . The hieratic of Fig. 18 on Facsimile No. 2 repeats a word unnecessarily at the beginning and is an incomplete thought. At least it does not end where the identical Hor Sensen thought ends. The Fig. 18 hieratic reads "Khebit, Khebit (a god named twice). . . the two arms with the heart are wrapped up with . . .".

Figs. 13, 14 and 15 on Facsimile No. 2 are just as confused. Each of these three lines is partly written in hieroglyphic and partly in hieratic. The left hand end of each line shows several clearly identifiable hieroglyphic bookhand symbols while the remainder is hieratic. Again the hieratic is upside down and, as before, reads in the opposite direction from the hieroglyphic. In addition to this, if one reads the hieratic only, beginning with the line designated as Fig. 15 and continues with the hieratic in Fig. 14 and then that in Fig. 13 he finds a continuous message reading: (15) "Book of" (14) "Breathing(s)" (13) "which [Isis] made, and which . . ." This is a continuation of the hieratic in Fig. 18 (exactly as written in line 4, column 1, Hor Papyrus Frag. No. 1), but the message ends abruptly without completing the thought. Now if there is any doubt that the hieratic was copied from the Hor Papyrus, I can dispell it easily by pointing out that the scribe who wrote the Hor Papyrus misspelled the word "Breathings." He omitted the pluralizing marks at the end of the word. This is highly unusual in the

Book of Breathings, particularly as it is part of the title. The same error appears in Fig. 14. If the hieratic had been written on the hypocephalus by a scribe in ancient Egyptian times he would not have placed the hieratic so promiscuously in the hieroglyphic inscriptions, he would not have written sentences without beginnings or endings, and he would not have continued half-finished passages in the middle of half-finished hieroglyphic lines. One is forced to the conclusion that the hieratic passages which appear on Facsimile No. 2 are completely haphazard, serve no useful purpose in their occurrence there, convey no complete thoughts and were chosen entirely at random from an irrelevant text. They were obviously copied upon the Facsimile in comparatively modern times by an individual who could not read either traditional hieroglyphic bookhand or hieratic scripts.

Why did Joseph Smith copy parts of the Hor Sensen Papyrus and the so-called Book of Abraham characters upon a printed cut of an irrelevant and **pagan object** such as the hypocephalus represented in Facsimile No. 2? The fact that he (or an associate) did so is **inescapable** . . . (*Joseph Smith's "Eye of Ra,"* by Dee Jay Nelson, pages 22-25)

Dee Jay Nelson also makes this statement on page 22 of the same book:

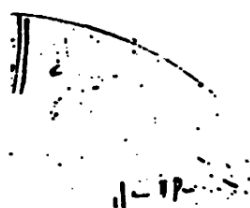
For a Sensen (Book of Breathings) inscription to be written upon a hypocephalus is about as logical as to find part of the Koran in the New Testament.

### Part C

The area at the top of Facsimile No. 2 (Part C) showing a god in a boat was evidently copied from the fragment of papyrus which Dr. Nibley labeled "IV. Framed ('Trinity') papyrus." (See photograph No. 4 on page 115 of Vol. 2 of *The Case Against Mormonism*. This photograph also appeared in the *Improvement Era*, February 1968, page 40-D.) The editors of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* realized that the drawing on the papyrus is similar to Part C (Joseph Smith labeled this Fig. 3) on Facsimile No. 2. When they published the photograph of that piece of papyrus they made this comment:

The manuscript reproduced here contains a drawing (lower right hand corner) **very similar** to Figure 3 of Facsimile No. 2 of the Book of Abraham. (*Dialogue*, Winter 1967, page 60)

At the top of the next page is a photograph of Part C as it appears in the drawing in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. Next to this we have placed Part C as it was printed in the *Times and Seasons*. To the right of this we have placed the portion of "IV. Framed ('Trinity') papyrus" which we feel was added to Part C.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7

In all but one of our samples of hypocephali we think this area filled with two boats, and the one which has only one boat does not resemble Part C of Facsimile No. 2.

R. C. Webb made this statement concerning this area of Facsimile No. 2:

Several hypocephali show only this figure in the position corresponding to our panel No. 3; but the more general rule seems to be that there are two boats, (1) the boat of the Sun-god, and (2) the boat seeming to accord with the description, Boat of the "soul," as containing various figures consistent with such a proposed title. Among the several examples shown herewith that referred to the Paris collection shows one boat, but, instead of a seated figure, it contains a cabin, and hovering over it a beetle (khpr, usually rendered as "kheper"), the accepted symbol of creatorship, or of God as Creator. In front of this figure is the symbol of Isis, and behind it, that of Nebhat.

Other examples shown herewith contain this same "beetle" figure, but in association with the conventional representation of Ra, . . .

As may be seen from our comparisons, the boat shown in panel 3 of the Facsimile differs from the representations that are most familiar. . . .

Another notable departure from the usual seems to lie in the representation, before the seated figure, of what appears to be an offering table, surmounted by flowers, whose stems reach from the deck behind. Such a table, in this position, may be said to be unparalleled; . . . offering-tables are unfamiliar in hypocephali, which makes their presence, in Fig. 2, as well as in the present figure, all the more noteworthy. In the first case, it appears to be substituted for such hieroglyphics as appear in other specimens: . . . (*Joseph Smith as a Translator*, pages 177-180)

In the *Improvement Era*, R. C. Webb made this statement:

The majority of known hypocephali conform in general details with the second plate of the Book of Abraham. . . . several hypocephali have two boats, the one above the other. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, March 1913, page 443)

In the *Improvement Era*, Vol. 17, page 333, R. C. Webb stated that "this figure differs from the representations found in the general run of hypocephali." Now that we have evidence that Joseph Smith added this portion from the "Trinity" papyrus, we understand why it differs from other hypocephali.

The Mormon Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson makes this comment concerning this matter:

Grant Heward and Jerald Tanner have successfully demonstrated that the solar bark labeled Fig. 3 on Facsimile No. 2 was **not** originally drawn on the hypocephalus owned by the early Latter-day Saint Church but was copied from Chapter (Spell) 101 of the Ta-shert-Min Papyrus Fragment No. 6 (*Dialogue*, Summer issue 1968). (*Joseph Smith's "Eve of Ra,"* page 20)

Joseph Smith gave this interpretation of Part C:

Fig. 3. Is made to represent God, sitting upon his throne, clothed with power and authority; with a crown of eternal light upon his head; representing also the grand Key-words of the Holy Priesthood, as revealed to Adam in the Garden of Eden, as also to Seth, Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham, and all to whom the Priesthood was revealed. (*Pearl of Great Price*, page 35)

Joseph Smith would have us believe that this is a representation of the God of Abraham. Actually, it

represents the Egyptian Sun-god. The Sun-god is shown with the head of a hawk. Dr. Nibley states that this figure has “the head of an ibis” (*Improvement Era*, April 1968, page 65). This statement is not correct. But even if it did have the head of an “ibis” it would not help the Mormon position. The god with the head of an ibis was named Thoth. Thoth was the Egyptian god of “writing and mathematics” (*Egyptian Grammar*, by Alan Gardiner, 1964, page 113).

Dr. Albert M. Lythgoe, who was head of the Dept. of Egyptian Art at the Metropolitan Museum, made this statement concerning Part C:

And when it comes to the Mormon picture of “God on His Throne, signifying the Grand Key-Words of the Holy Priesthood as revealed to Adam in the Garden of Eden,” why that is a sad joke.

The representation is the most common of all in Egyptian papyri. It is the view of the “Sun god in his boat.” The Mormon version is right in that this is the picture of a god, but it is the chief god of a polytheistic people instead of God, who was worshipped by monotheistic Abraham, and pictures of him were among the widely distributed pictures in Egypt. (*New York Times*, Magazine Section, Sunday, December 29, 1912, page 1)

James Henry Breasted gives this information concerning the Sun-god:

The favorite picture of him discloses him sailing across the celestial ocean in the sun-barque, of which there were two, one for the morning and the other for the evening. (*Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, New York, 1959, page 10)

As we indicated earlier, we feel that Part C of Facsimile No. 2 was taken from “IV. Framed (‘Trinity’) papyrus.” Dee Jay Nelson gives us this information concerning the drawing which appears on this fragment of papyrus:

So little of the text is intact that it is barely possible to identify the chapter from the opening text, but the illustration is enough to label it with some assurance. It shows Ra (hawk-headed) with a solar disk upon his head, sitting on a divine throne in his boat. He is holding the Uas Scepter which symbolizes tranquility. In front of him, in the boat, is a small altar with a lotus bud upon it. In front and behind Ra are Uchat Eyes, the all-seeing eyes of Horus (or Ra). (*The Joseph Smith Papyri—A Translation and Preliminary Survey of the Ta-shert-Min and Ter Papyri*, Salt Lake City, 1968, pages 20-21)

Dee Jay Nelson states that the drawing is from “Chapter 101” of the Book of the Dead. John A. Wilson, Professor of Egyptology at the University of Chicago, confirms the fact that the drawing found on the papyrus is the illustration for chapter 101:

Next comes chapter 101, for which our vignette corresponds to the standard scene: the sun-god Re in his barque. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, page 81)

## Part D

Below is a comparison of Part D as it appears in the *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* (to the left) with the way it was printed in the *Times and Seasons* (to the right).



The reader will note that part of the drawing which appears in the *Times and Seasons* is a work of the imagination, for this area was missing in the drawing in the “Egyptian Alphabet.” Notice that Joseph Smith reconstructed the one figure as a dove. This is not correct. Deveria stated that it is supposed to be an “ithyphallic serpent,” and that it “has certainly been altered in the hypocephalus of the Mormons.” When we compare Part D on other hypocephali, we see that Deveria was correct. R. C. Webb’s photographs have been “doctored” in Part D, but we have been able to obtain accurate photographs of two of these, plus the one that was published in the *New York Times*, December 29, 1912.

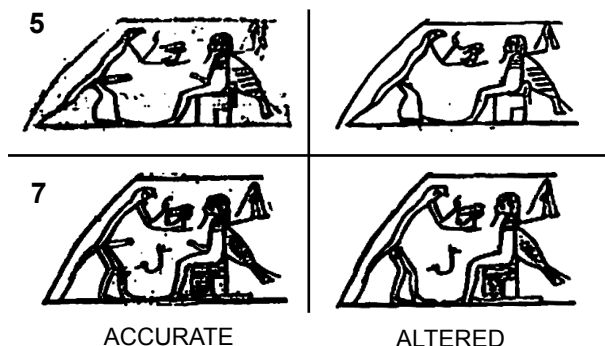


Joseph Smith gave this interpretation of Part D:

Fig. 7. Represents God sitting upon his throne, revealing through the heavens the grand Key-words of the Priesthood; as, also, the sign of the Holy Ghost unto Abraham, in the form of a dove. (*Pearl of Great Price*, page 35)

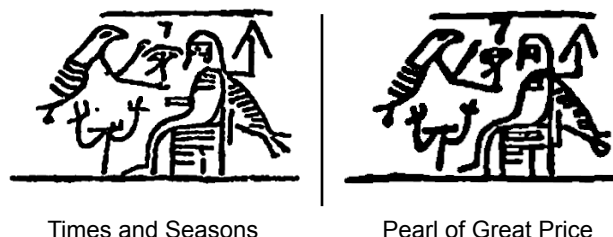
After examining other hypocephali, we are convinced that what Joseph Smith claimed was “God” upon His throne and “the sign of the Holy Ghost” in the “form of a dove” is, in reality, a pagan drawing which is extremely crude in appearance. It would appear that the Mormon leaders have been trying to keep their people in the dark

concerning this matter, for when they published pictures of different hypocephali in the book, *Joseph Smith as a Translator*, by R. C. Webb, the pictures were altered so that they did not have the same crude appearance. This book was printed by “The Deseret News Press”—a Mormon publishing company—in 1936. Below are two examples of Part D from accurate photographs compared with the same portions as they appear in Webb’s book:



We feel that five of “Dr. Webb’s” pictures, shown at the first part of this chapter, have been altered in Part D.

The Mormon leaders may have feared that the seated god in Facsimile No. 2 was also shown as ithyphallic, for in modern editions of the *Pearl of Great Price*, Part D has been altered. Below is a photograph of Part D as it was first published in the *Times and Seasons*, in 1842 and the way it appears in the *Pearl of Great Price* today—1966 edition.



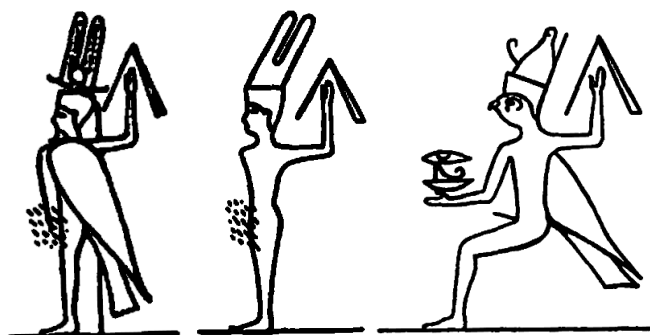
We have been informed that the Mormon Apostle James E. Talmage spoke of this change and the reason for it in some of his papers, but since we are denied access to manuscripts in the LDS Church Library we are unable to confirm this.

The Mormon Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson shows that the seated god is probably an ithyphallic god. On page 16 of Joseph Smith’s “Eye of Ra” he makes this statement:

The god sits upon a throne. He has the back of a hawk and holds one arm up behind him. A flail, symbol of power, floats above his finger tips. This god is not named

but he is probably a manifestation of Min or Minu who is sometimes called the God of the Lifted Arm or an associated ithyphallic god.

Allan Gardiner states that Min is an “ithyphallic god with feathers, uplifted arm, and flagellum” (*Egyptian Grammar*, page 449). Dee Jay Nelson has drawn a few examples which are similar to the one which appears in Facsimile No. 2. Below are three examples from his book, *Joseph Smith’s “Eye of Ra.”* The one to the left “appears in the bas-relief in the Hall of Nekhthorheb.” The one in the center is from “the south side of the Festival Hall of Oserkon 2nd,” and the one to the right appears on “the famous Metternick Stela (obverse).”



Dee Jay Nelson points out that the “Egyptian Moslems, prompted by their moral indignation, have chipped the phalli from most of these bas-reliefs” (*Joseph Smith’s “Eye of Ra,”* page 16). Some of the scenes which show Osiris lying on his bier may have been altered in the same manner, but we do not know whether this was done by the “Egyptian Moslems” or by modern printers for the sake of decency. One scene shown in the *Improvement Era*, October 1968, page 74, has definitely been altered in modern times, for when it was printed in the book, *Osiris, The Egyptian Religion of Resurrection*, by E. A. Wallis Budge, New York, 1961, Vol. 1, page 280, the god Osiris was shown as ithyphallic.

Even though the pictures are censored in R. C. Webb’s book, he gives a great deal of information which we would not expect in a book published by the Mormon Church:

Our study of the figures shown on the hypocephalus concludes with that numbered “7.” This includes a seated figure to which another, apparently bird-headed, and with arms extended, as if in adoration, holding a sacred eye. A very similar group appears on nearly all known examples of hypocephalus; varying from that shown in our Facsimile No. 2, in the fact that the figure offering the sacred eye appears with an attenuated body—apparently a serpent, but with legs of human description.



... The traditional caption accompanying the Book of Abraham reads: "Represents God Sitting upon His throne revealing through the heavens the grand Keywords of the Priesthood; as also the sign of the Holy Ghost . . . in the form of a dove."

In regard to the latter clause of this caption, it is necessary to remark that, the figure shown in the Facsimile before us closely resembles some bird of the dove class, even though the apparent bird-head on other specimens is less easily susceptible of description.

Of the seated figure very much more may be asserted with confidence. Evidently it is a composite of two figures as indicated by the body of a bird (the tail extending downward at the rear) with human head, legs and one arm, bent and held to the rear, supporting a bent object. In these signs, we have the distinctive marks of two separate "gods," or "avatars"—to wit, Horus (with the hawk-body) and Min supporting a flail or whip upon the tip of his right-hand middle finger.

... Of Min, it is correct, probably, to state that he was a conspicuous ba, or "soul," of the Supreme—which is to say, that he was in origin, apparently a local deity, subsequently identified with the Supreme Godhead. He appears first as a **phallic god** of desert lands and of husbandry, . . . In any event, as is agreed generally, his significance is that of Creator, or Amon-Generator, the Father of the world. This function of his is expressed in the opinions of leading Egyptologists who have written on the hypocephalus and its figure elements. Thus:

The serpent Nehab-ka, offering the right symbolic eye to a seated pantheistic type of Amen-Ra as Amsi (or Amsu), figures of part of the vignettes of the 162nd and following chapters of the Ritual.—Dr. Samuel Birch (*Pros., Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, vi., page 184).

The seated deity, half man and half hawk, is a type of Amon, the generating principle; he holds the whip in his hand, and a phallic serpent, with a hawk's head and human legs, offers him the mystical eye. All these different symbols represent, on the one side, the female and on the other, the male element, to express the idea of the eternal generative power.—Dr. P. J. de Horrack (*Pros., Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, vi., page 127).

The god with the hawk's body is a form of Amon-Generator; he holds the arm with the whip in the sacred attitude (which is) the masculine symbol of this same generation. This is why the serpent also offers him the Utza. This serpent with the head of a hawk and the human legs is a variant of the same symbol making allusion to the creative power. One sees therefore in this scene, on the one side the female principle, and on the other the male, expressing together the idea of eternal generation.—Dr. C. Leemans (*Actes du Congres* etc.).

From these accounts offered by recognized authorities, we may understand that the significance of this group deals primarily with the creative function of Deity. Their further opinions to the effect that the "male" and "female" elements are indicated respectively by the seated figure and the standing serpent must be much less obvious—particularly when we consider that according to

the representations of Egyptian artists both of these figures are of the male sex. Into this matter, however, we need not inquire further, since none of our authorities has given us the grounds for his judgment, and, in any event, the question involves no considerations at all relevant to our discussion. (*Joseph Smith as a Translator*, pages 202-204)

In the *Improvement Era*, "Dr. Webb" made these comments:

The analysis of this group is very nearly the most interesting of any on the entire plate. In virtually all "hypocephali" examined the space corresponding to this group is occupied by a seated winged figure, before which, in general, stands the phallic serpent "Nehebka," as already suggested, holding the **Uzat** eye in outstretched hands. The figure called "Nehebka," however, is **radically different** from the one shown in the present plate, the only common point, in addition to the position, is the sacred eye held before the face of the seated figure. . . .

The group shown in the common run of hypocephali is evidently entirely **phallic**, the seated figure being usually identified with the dual god, Horus-Min, who, in certain local cults, combines the offices and functions of Horus and a deity known as Min. This latter was, according to Egyptologists, originally a local god of the desert, and of strangers, in general. He is also identified with a deity called Amsu. By other, or later, ascriptions, he becomes identified with the creative principle of nature, or the universal generative power typified in phallic symbols. . . .

There may be allowed to be a difference of opinion, as to whether the group shown here is the original form, or whether it is merely a variation of the usual, as shown on the common hypocephalus. There is, however, no obvious reason for changing from the phallic to the non-phallic character, if we consider this only one of a general run of Egyptian documents. On the other hand, there is a very good and sufficient reason for making the change from such a group as this to the phallic character, if the interpretation offered by Joseph Smith is in any sense correct. Smith called this seated figure "God sitting upon his throne," hence the Creator of the universe. According to the conception evidently held by him, and, presumably also, by the original compiler of this group, the Almighty Creator operates by virtue of a word of power. To the Egyptian artist, the symbol of creative power is the phallic symbol. Hence, knowing, perhaps, that the group represented God, he **embellished it** according to one of the most popular of Egyptian concepts, relating to the beginning of things. The familiar variation of this group adds strong presumption in favor of the description given in Smith's caption. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, page 447)

It is strange that the Mormon leaders would allow "Dr. Webb" to tell so much, and yet they found it necessary to use altered pictures in his book. They probably felt that most people would not understand what he was talking about. R. C. Webb also discusses Part D in the *Improvement Era*, Vol. 17, pages 333-334.

## Part E

Part E of Facsimile No. 2 closely resembles at least two of our samples of hypocephali. Below is a comparison.



M



7



3

The reader will note that all of our samples shown at the beginning of this chapter are somewhat similar to Facsimile No. 2 in the area we have designated as Part E.

The four standing figures to the right in Part E are the four sons of Horus. Notice that their arms are not showing. Dee Jay Nelson explains that they usually appear this way:

They are usually armless and mummiform. Their names are . . . human headed Amset or Mesta, baboon-headed Hapy or Hep, jackal-headed Duamutef and falcon-headed Qebhsenuf. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, page 32)

Dr. Petrie gives this interesting information concerning the cow found on the hypocephalus:

"The hypocephalus appears to have had its origin in connection with Chapter clxii. of the Book of the Dead. From the rubric of this chapter we learn that the figure of the Cow Hathor was to be fashioned of gold, and placed upon the neck of the mummy; and that another was to be drawn upon papyrus, and placed under the head, the idea being to give 'warmth' to the deceased in the Underworld. After the Eighteenth Dynasty the cow-amulet fell into disuse, and the drawing upon papyrus developed into the hypocephalus, upon which the cow always remained an important figure. Papyrus was almost entirely abandoned in favor of more durable material, such as linen, stucco, and rarely bronze." (Statement by Dr. Petrie, as quoted in *Joseph Smith as a Translator*, by R. C. Webb, page 155)

## Part F

Part F is similar to several of our samples of hypocephali. Below is a comparison.



M



5



7



2



3



1

It is interesting to note that the portion of Part F which contains the offering table in the printed version is blank in the drawing in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. The offering table in Facsimile No. 1 in the Book of Abraham looks very similar to the one which has been added here. Below is Part F as it was drawn in the *Egyptian Alphabet* (to the left). Next to it is the published version, and to the right is the offering table found in Facsimile No. 1 as it is printed in the *Times and Seasons*.



R. C. Webb makes this comment about the offering table:

... offering-tables are unfamiliar in hypocephali, which makes their presence, in Fig. 2, as well as in the present figure, all the more noteworthy. In the first case, it appears to be substituted for such hieroglyphics as appear in other specimens; ... (*Joseph Smith as a Translator*, page 180)



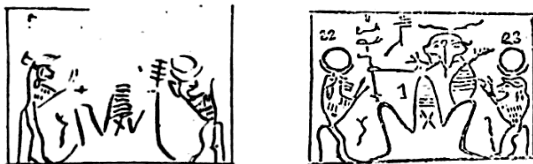
Since the offering table does not appear in the drawing in the "Egyptian Alphabet" and since it so closely resembles the one printed in Facsimile No. 1, we feel that it must be an interpolation.

Dee Jay Nelson feels that the god shown with two faces in Part F is the god Par:

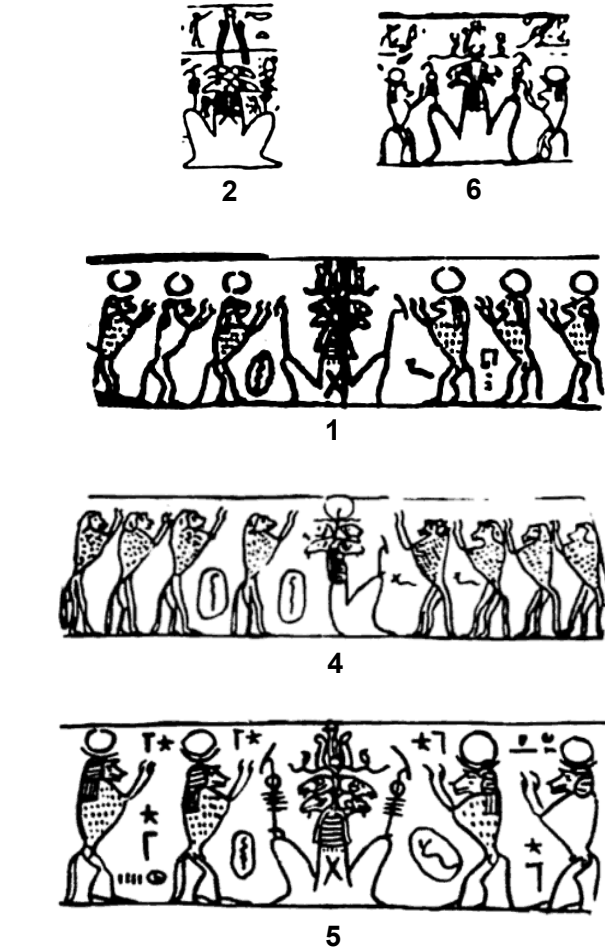
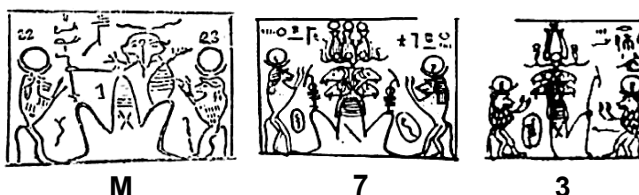
To place the Lord of the phallus in proper perspective I must explain that all three of the papyri mentioned also call him by another name . . . "Mighty Lord, Lofty of Plumes" because of the feathered head emblem he wears. "Lord of the phallus" and "Mighty Lord, Lofty of Plumes" are two of the many names by which the god Par or Paru was known. He is one of the principal solar gods and his prime name, Par or Paru probably originated in the two-word phrase, *pa Ra*, meaning "the Sun God." He is shown upon most hypocephali in a dominant position wearing a headdress in the form of a pair of Kudu horns in the apex of which is a solar disk ornamented with two upright plumes. Usually he is drawn with two faces. Fig. No. 2 on Facsimile No. 2 meets all these requirements and is identical to "Par, Mighty Lord, Lofty of Plumes, Lord of the phallus" drawn upon Ahait Amulets which I have seen in the British Museum and in other collections. Par's symbol of office is a standard with a platform at the top upon which is mounted an image of a standing jackal. In the Book of Abraham circular cut the personage designated as Fig. No. 2 holds just such a standard. . . . The god Par appears in the *Pearl of Great Price* illustration. The evidence substantiating this fact is overwhelming. (*Joseph Smith's "Eye of Ra,"* page 13)

### Part G

From the drawing in the "Egyptian Alphabet" it would appear that a portion of Part G was missing on the original hypocephalus. Below is a comparison of Part G as it appears in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* (to the left) and as it appears in the *Times and Seasons* (to the right).



In other hypocephali the figure in the center seems to have four heads. Below is a comparison.



The Egyptologist M. Theodule Deveria made this comment concerning Part G of the Mormon Hypocephalus.

This God is **always** represented with four rams' heads, and his image has certainly **been altered here**. They have also evidently made a very clumsy attempt at copying the double human head of the god figured above, fig. 2, instead of the four rams' heads. . . . (*A Journey to Great Salt Lake City*, Vol. 2, as quoted in *Deseret News*, January 4, 1913)

We feel that Deveria's theory that the Mormons filled in this area with the same "double human head of the god figured above" is probably correct. Below is a comparison of Part F and Part G.



R. C. Webb made this comment concerning Part G of Facsimile No. 2:

To return to consideration of the central figure in the Hypocephalus, we may notice that in Facsimile, No. 2, it presents several differences as compared with other specimens. Thus, instead of the four rams' heads, looking in opposite directions, it seems to have only two faces of indefinite description. Also, these, instead of resting upon the shoulders of the double body, as is usual, are offset to the right, standing between it and a shaded element which rests upon the right knee. It lacks also the usual elaborate crown, having only two horn-like projections upon the head, without even the disk (solar or lunar), as in the Paris Hypocephalus shown herewith. We miss also the usual composite scepters, with the symbols of "strength," "life" and "stability;" . . . (*Joseph Smith as a Translator*, page 169)

In the *Improvement Era* "Dr. Webb" made these comments:

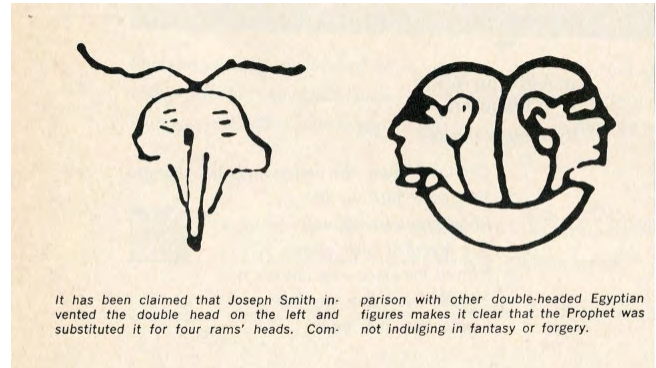
The central figure, numbered 1, evidently double-faced, seated and holding some form of sceptre or symbolic staff in the outstretched right hand, differs from the figure occupying the same position in other hypocephali. In general, this central figure is shown with four heads or faces, two looking each way, and appears to warrant the explanation of Dr. Petrie that it indicates the four-ram-headed god of Memphis, a form of Ra, the Sun God, . . . Since, however, the figure under consideration evidently does **not** show four heads of rams or other beings, and is evidently double-faced only, it is reasonable to conclude that some different explanation must apply here. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, page 444)

R. C. Webb also comments on Part G in the *Improvement Era*, Vol. 17, page 329. Dr. Hugh Nibley tries to confuse the issue by stating:

If Joseph Smith "altered the drawings to suit his purposes," why don't they suit his purposes? . . . What possible point or advantage, then, could there be to distorting, elaborating, or recomposing perfectly meaningless symbols or falsifying genuine texts by rearranging them in different but equally meaningless combinations? Take the two-headed man in Facsimile 2 (Fig. 1), for example, who we are told, should be a four-headed ram. A four-headed ram, however, is ridiculous— whoever saw a four-headed ram? So Joseph shrewdly

redraws the figure to make something more plausible, an ordinary two-headed man? . . . If we attribute the irregularities in the figures to deliberate transformation, we must still admit that the alterations are by no means such as a modern artist would make. . . . And when he puts human heads in the place of rams' heads, how does it happen that he draws the kind of double human heads that only Egyptians draw? (See illustration.) (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, pages 75-76)

Dr. Nibley's illustration is found on page 77 of the same article. Below is a photograph of it as it appears in the *Improvement Era*.

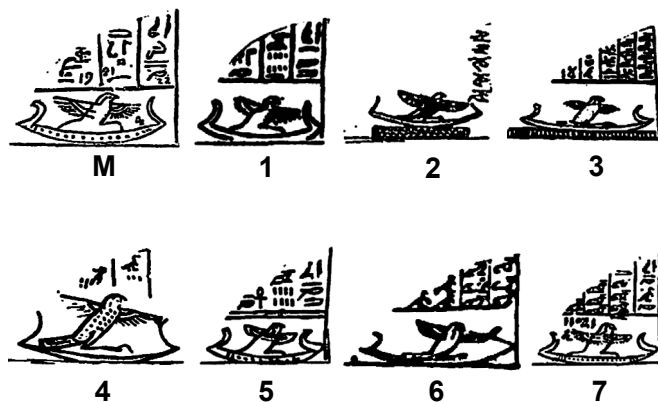


Dr. Nibley goes to great lengths to try to make it appear that "everything" is in "order." It is obvious, however, to those who study Facsimile No. 2 that everything is not in order. The drawing of Part G in the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" was blank in the area where Deveria claimed the "four rams' heads" should appear, and the "double human head of the god" which appeared directly above in Part F so closely resembles what was added in Part G that we are almost forced to the conclusion that it is the same thing. We feel that this answers Dr. Nibley's question as to "how" it happens that Joseph or his scribe "draws the kind of double human heads that only Egyptians draw." We must remember that the god with two faces did appear in Part F of the drawing in the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar." Therefore, it would have been a simple matter to recopy the same thing in Part G. It is also possible that some of the hieroglyphs in Part G were copied from Part F.

## Part H

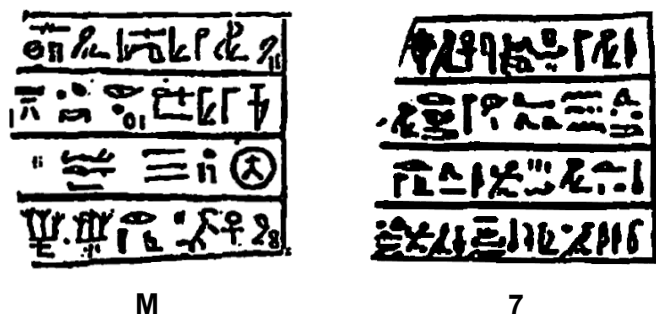
Part H on the Mormon Hypocephalus (Facsimile No. 2) is similar to our examples of other hypocephali.

Below is a comparison of Part H of Facsimile No. 2 with the samples of other hypocephali.



## Part I

Part I of the Mormon Hypocephalus is similar to the "Leyden Hypocephalus." They both have four lines of writing in this area. Below is a comparison of the two.



Joseph Smith has numbered this portion upside down. Samuel A. B. Mercer made this comment concerning this matter:

Figs. 8-11. Here indeed the Prophet's inspiration gave out. It does not even save him the blunder of numbering the hieroglyphics upside down. . . . his numbering the hieroglyphic lines upside down shows that the Prophet did not know Egyptian. (*The Utah Survey*, September, 1913, page 24)

The last line of Part I of the Mormon Hypocephalus gives the name of the person for whom it was made. Dee Jay Nelson gives this information about the name:

3. The original from which Facsimile No. 2 was copied was made for a male individual who is named upon the hypocephalus. His name was Shasha, Shashak or Shashaq. Though this name is similar to several Pharaohs of the Twenty-second Dynasty (945 to 745 B.C.), he lived much later and was probably not of royal blood. (*Joseph Smith's "Eye of Ra,"* page 27)

John A. Wilson, of the University of Chicago, has made this statement concerning Facsimile No. 2:

A hypocephalus was a cartonnage disk which was placed under the head of a mummy toward the end of ancient Egyptian history. I think that the name of the owner appears as Sheshonk. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, page 68)

Dr. James R. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, tries to explain the presence of this name on Facsimile No. 2 by stating that someone may have added the name to the drawing after Abraham's death:

According to certain scholars who have examined *The Pearl of Great Price* there is evidence on the facsimiles that would suggest a late date for at least a part of the inscriptions from which Joseph Smith translated the Book of Abraham—much later than the time of Abraham.

Dr. W. M. Flinders Petrie of London University, an eminent Egyptian archaeologist of forty years ago wrote in 1912:

I have examined the illustrations given in the *Pearl of Great Price*. . . . they are all many centuries later than Abraham. On number 2, I think there is—so far as the copy shows it—the name of Shishak, a popular name in Egypt from about 950 to 750 B.C., and such seems to be about the date of the other figures. . . .

This letter of Dr. Petrie was one of eight received by the Reverend Spalding, Episcopal Bishop of Salt Lake City . . . Could Dr. Petrie have been correct in reading the name of Shishak on Facsimile No. 2 and still not invalidate the translation of Joseph Smith? . . . Since the scholars have found these hypocephalli in late dynasty burials only, they have concluded that Joseph Smith's papyrus must be from the late dynasties also. Two other possibilities exist, however, to explain the similarities. One is that not all of the inscription on Facsimile No. 2 from the Book of Abraham was written at Abraham's time. The Facsimile may have been added to by some later scribe. . . . is there a chance of some later inscriptions being added to the record after it left the hands of Abraham? . . .

If Dr. Petrie reads the name Shishak (or its equivalent) on Facsimile No. 2 of the Book of Abraham and Shishak lived between 950 and 750 B.C., while Abraham, on whose record his name is recorded lived around 2000 B.C. does that invalidate the record? Must we assume that the whole papyrus would have to be written either at 2000 B.C. or at 750 B.C.? Is it not possible that a scribe around 950-750 B.C. might have added this name and perhaps other names to the original record started but not finished by Abraham? If we should find another example of a name seemingly added at a later date to Abraham's record in the unpublished part of Joseph Smith's translation it might make this problem of final authorship of the entire papyrus more acute. The fact that Dr. Petrie may have recognized some of the forms of the characters on the facsimiles and even some of the words as having been of a later date need not invalidate the record as a whole as being the writings of Abraham and his patriarchal successors. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, by James R. Clark, Salt Lake City, 1962, pages 117-123)

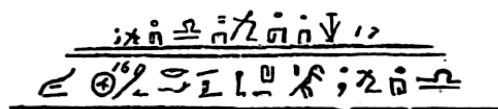
On page 137 of the same book, Dr. Clark stated:

2. Someone probably wrote on the papyrus as late as 945 B.C. and put the name of Shishak, the Libyan ruler of Egypt on the papyrus. Could it have been Rehoboam, son of Solomon, King of Israel?

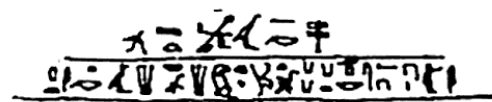
These statements by Dr. Clark will give the reader an idea of how far Mormon apologists will go in their efforts to defend Joseph Smith's Book of Abraham.

## Part J

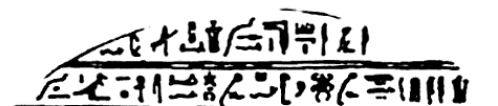
Most of our examples of hypocephali have only one line of hieroglyphs in Part J, but there are two which have two lines of writing in this area. Below is a comparison of these two with the Mormon hypocephalus—we have turned these around so that the hieroglyphic writing is not upside down.



M



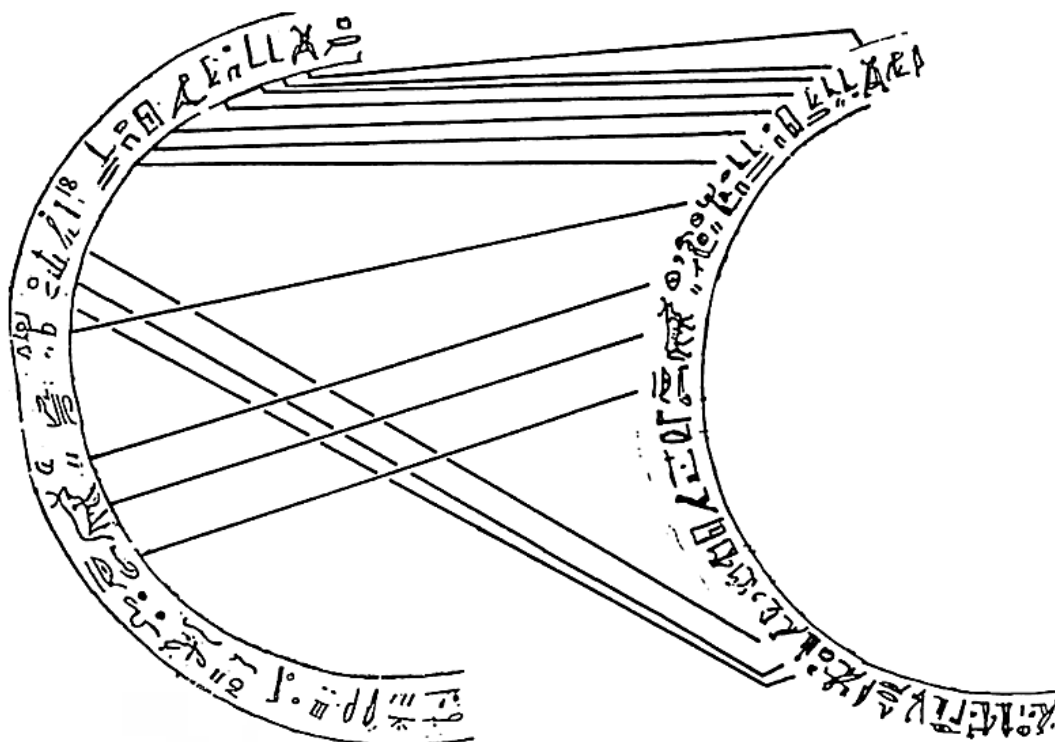
2



3

## Part K

The "Leyden Hypocephalus" contains many characters that are similar to this portion of the Mormon Hypocephalus. Below is a comparison of the two.



All of our samples of hypocephali have writing in Part K, and some of them seem to contain characters that are similar to the ones on the Mormon Hypocephalus. Dee Jay Nelson has pointed out that the British Museum Hypocephalus No. 37909 (shown as example 5 in this book) is very similar in Part K to the one in the Book of Abraham (*Joseph Smith's "Eye of Ra,"* pages 14-15)

## Joseph Smith Responsible

In our examination of Facsimile No. 2 we have found that it was reconstructed in a very peculiar way. First, areas that are blank in the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" have been filled in with characters and drawings from other documents. Second, lines of hieratic and hieroglyphic writing are joined together in a strange way—introducing foreign and unrelated thoughts. Third, to add to the confusion, the hieratic writing is inserted upside down in relation to the hieroglyphic text on the same lines.

The information presented above shows beyond all doubt that Joseph Smith did not have any idea of what the Egyptian language or drawings were all about. He did not even seem to know when the Egyptian writing was upside down. The most serious indictment against him, however, is that he falsified the documents and made many imaginative additions to the drawings.

Dr. Hugh Nibley claims that Joseph Smith cannot be held responsible for mistakes in the Facsimiles:

First of all, Joseph Smith did not draw the Facsimiles; they were the work of a professional wood engraver, Reuben Hedlock, . . . Some critics have noted that some of the numbers that have been added to Facsimile 2 are **upside down**, and have again assumed that Joseph Smith put them that way; but as R. C. Webb points out, "There is no evidence before us that Smith is responsible for it." (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 20)

While Joseph Smith cannot be held responsible for changes made after his death, he is certainly responsible for the falsifications that were made when the Book of Abraham was first published in 1842. Actually, Joseph Smith was the editor of the *Times and Seasons* at the time the Facsimiles were published. Under the date of March 1, 1842, we find this statement in his history:

During the forenoon I was at my office and the printing office, **correcting** the first plate or cut of the records of Father Abraham, prepared by Reuben Hedlock, for the *Times and Seasons*, . . .

Under the date of March 4, 1842, we find this entry in Joseph Smith's History:

Friday, 4.— At my office exhibiting the Book of Abraham in the original to Brother Reuben Hedlock, so that he might take the size of the several plates or cuts, and prepare the blocks for the *Times and Seasons*; and also gave instruction concerning the **arrangement of the writing** on the large cut, illustrating the principles of astronomy, with other general business. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 4, page 543)

The "large cut" refers to the hypocephalus. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made this statement in a footnote at the bottom of the same page: "This refers to Fac-simile No. 2, . . . which was published in the *Times and Seasons* in double page size."

Joseph Smith's statement that he "gave instructions concerning the arrangement of the writing" on this cut becomes much more significant now that we know that portions were added from other documents.

Dr. James R. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, certainly felt that Joseph Smith was responsible for the accuracy of the work on the Facsimiles:

It is significant and reassuring to us that Joseph Smith personally corrected the illustrations or Facsimiles and read the proof of the text of his translation of the Book of Abraham before he would allow copies of the *Times and Seasons* containing it to be circulated. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, Salt Lake City, 1962, page 170)

Thus we see that Joseph Smith would have been aware of the falsifications made in the Facsimiles, and therefore he stands responsible for the fraudulent reconstruction.

## Cannot Be Revealed

Although Joseph Smith gave his interpretation of the drawings on Facsimile No. 2, he did not attempt to read the hieroglyphic writing which appears on this hypocephalus. Joseph Smith claimed that this information was not to be given to the world at that time:

Fig. 8. Contains writing that **cannot be revealed** unto the world; but is to be had in the Holy Temple of God.

Fig. 9. **Ought not to be revealed** at the present time.  
Fig. 10. Also.

Fig. 11. Also. If the world can find out these numbers, so let it be. Amen.

Figures 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20, will be given in the own due time of the Lord.

The above translation is given as far as we have any right to give at the present time. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, page 35)

The science of Egyptology was in its infancy when Joseph Smith published these statements. Today it is possible for Egyptologists to read the writing which appears on Facsimile No. 2. The drawing which appears in the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" and the original "Sensen" papyrus have helped Egyptologists to read this writing. Even Dr. Nibley admits that Egyptologists are able to read at least some of the writing on the Mormon Hypocephalus:

Then too, we must recognize that there **really** are sections of hieroglyphic text in Facsimile 2 that present-day Egyptologists **read without too much trouble**: . . . (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, page 74)

The Mormon Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson states:

In the explanation accompanying this illustration in the Book of Abraham are these statements concerning essentially all of the ancient written inscriptions. "Ought not to be revealed at the present time (1842)." "If the world can find out these numbers, so let it be. Amen." "Will be given in the own due time of the Lord." The time seems to have arrived as I have succeeded after many years of work, following accepted methods in use by Egyptologists, in translating 94% of the texts on this circular drawing. (*Joseph Smith's "Eye of Ra,"* page 1)

On page 5 of the same book, Dee Jay Nelson states:

The identification of each character has necessitated careful perusal of that hieroglyphic on each of the printed facsimiles and comparison of these with Joseph Smith's Ink Drawing. To document each tentative identification and crystalize its meaning in the text I have examined many, and often hundreds, of examples of this character upon monuments in Egypt and in papyri. Final identification has been made using three widely recognized Egyptian Dictionaries, . . . This research has been a prodigious one involving more than sixteen years of work.

Dee Jay Nelson's translation deals a devastating blow to the Book of Abraham for it does not contain a word about Abraham or his religion. In fact, it proves beyond all doubt that Facsimile No. 2 is a pagan document.

Below we present Dee Jay Nelson's translation of the Mormon Hypocephalus. Just above it we have placed a photograph of Facsimile No. 2 (as it appears in the *Pearl of Great Price*) for easy reference purposes.



Fig. 2: "The names of god (have) great magical power."

Fig. 8: "Give life to the soul of Osiris Shashaq."

Fig. 9: "His Watery Underworld is great" and also the pun, "The Great Underworld is his proper place."

Fig. 10: "Great Chief god(ess) mistress of heaven and earth."

Fig. 11: "Hail! god (of) the sleeping dead at the time of judgement."

Figs. 11, 10, 9 and 8 probably constitute a single message reading from right to left in the order listed: "Hail god of the sleeping dead at the time of judgement, Great Chief God, lord (mistress) of heaven and earth. His watery Underworld is great. Give life to the soul of Osiris Shashaq."

Figs. 12, 13, 14 and 15 exhibit hieroglyphic writing at the left hand ends of each line but only the phrase "his words" is translatable at the end of Fig. 15. The remainder of each of these four lines is hieratic reading "Book of Breathing(s) which [Isis] made and which...." (the hieratic reads in this order... Fig. 15, 14 and 13).

Fig. 16: "None (shall) violate the soul and his Lord in the eternal Underworld."

Fig. 17: "(Thy) tomb (shall) not be violated."

Fig. 18: (hieroglyphic beginning) "I provide (for thee) my hiding place in the Temple of the Benbenet at the exalted (city of) Heliopolis. (Thou art) dressed (like the) mighty Bull of Verility (who is) without equal (among the eight) great Neteru Hettui in the Temple of the Benbenet at Heliopolis ..... that great truth." or "I provide (for thee) my hiding place in the Temple of the

Benbenet at the exalted (city of) Heliopolis. (Thou art) dressed (like the) mighty Bull of Verility (who is) without equal (among the) gods. Hail great (one) in the Temple of the Benbenet at Heliopolis ..... that great truth.” “(Thou art) dressed (like the)...” seems to have been written in modern times.

Fig. 18: (hieratic on the right hand side) “.....Khebit, Khebit...the two arms with his heart are wrapped up with...”

Fig. 19: Untranslatable

Fig. 20: (Possibly) “Thou art in the presence of god.”

Fig. 21: “Praise be to thee.”

(*Joseph Smith's “Eve of Ra,”* page 211)

## A Pagan Object

Dee Jay Nelson gives this interesting information concerning Facsimile No. 2:

It is apparent that Facsimile No. 2 in the *Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham hears a striking resemblance to typical hypocephali now in some of the world's leading museums. These similarities are so exact that the evidence overwhelmingly proves that Joseph Smith Jr. actually reproduced a hypocephalus, Ahait Amulet, from an ancient papyrus or papyrus fragment into the Book of Abraham and labeled it Facsimile No. 2. Almost every feature of this Facsimile has a counterpart either on other hypocephali, in texts from the Saite Recension of the Book of the Dead (Per em Heru) or in illustrative portions of this series of funeral texts. No reasonable person can deny the common denominator in view of the documented evidence set forth in the foregoing study. . . .

1. Facsimile No. 2 is actually a drawing of an ancient Egyptian Ahait, Cow-goddess Amulet called by modern Egyptologists a hypocephalus. This amulet is also called the Utchat Eye or Eye of Ra and was associated very intimately with ancient Egyptian sun-worship cults, especially at Heliopolis. The ancient Egyptians believed

that the amulet would keep heat in the body of the deceased and protect it from molestation. To this end the amulet, drawn upon a sheet of new papyrus glued to several layers of plastered linen, was placed under the head of the mummy.

2. The earliest of these circular drawings, known as hypocephali, date from the Seventh Century B.C. and so are several hundred years later than the latest possible date of Abraham. Facsimile No. 2 thus could not possibly have been copied from a scroll written by the hand of Abraham. The Facsimile's calligraphy and some text wording compares favorably with a British Museum specimen dating later than 663 B.C.

3. The original from which Facsimile No. 2 was copied was made for a male individual who is named upon the hypocephalus. His name was Shasha. Shashak or Shashaq. . . .

4. The gods, goddesses and forms of gods named or pictured on Facsimile No. 2 are: Par, Lofty of Plumes, Lord of the Phallus; Khnemu; Khepra-Ra (in his boat, a god with a hawk's head); Hathor, Ahait the Heavenly Cow-goddess; The four sons of Horus who were Amset or Mesta (human-header); Hapi (baboon-headed); Qenehsenuf (jackal-headed); Duamutef (hawk-headed); Menu, a form of Amon or one of Menu's counterparts, also called God of the Lifted Arm; the Great God; Neteru Hettui (the eight Great Runners); the Mighty Bull; two of the Apes of Dawn; God of the Sleeping Dead. (*Joseph Smith's “Eye of Ra,”* pages 25-27)

On page 15 of the same book, Dee Jay Nelson states that the “round Book of Abraham illustration is nothing more spectacular than a typical late date Egyptian hypocephalus,” and on page 25 he states that Facsimile No. 2 is a “pagan object.” We feel that we must agree with Dee Jay Nelson. All evidence that we have found points to the unmistakable conclusion that this is a pagan object and has nothing to do with Abraham or his religion.

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### 3. FACSIMILE NO. 1

Joseph Smith claimed that Facsimile No. 1 was a picture of an idolatrous priest trying to sacrifice Abraham on an altar. Below is a photograph of Facsimile No. 1 as it is printed in the *Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, page 28. This is followed by Joseph Smith's interpretation of the drawing.

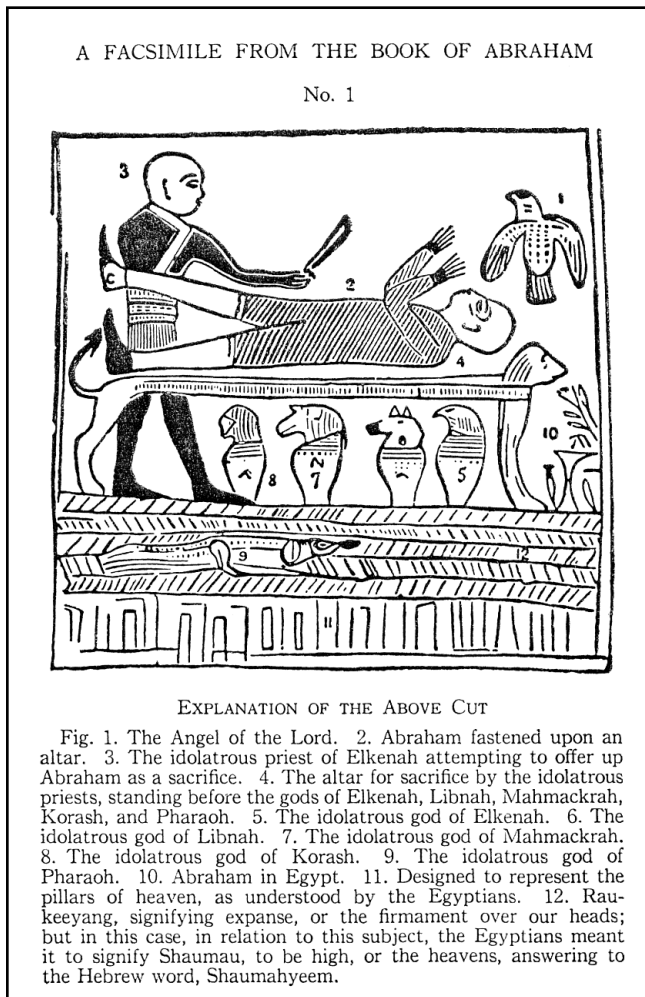
James R. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, made this statement concerning Facsimile No. 1:

Another thing to be noticed about the Book of Abraham is that the Facsimiles are intended to serve as illustrations of the text. When Joseph Smith translated the text of Abraham 1:10-12 the whole idea of the altar and the sacrifice was contained in a single character.

But he, Abraham, wanted to make sure that his reader would clearly understand what the altar actually looked like so he "drew a picture" for his reader. That picture or illustration is Facsimile No. 1. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, page 119)

Abraham himself was supposed to have made this statement concerning the drawing which appears in Facsimile No. 1:

And it came to pass that the priests laid violence upon me, that they might slay me also, as they did those virgins upon this altar; and that you may have a knowledge of this altar, I will refer you to the representation at the commencement of this record.





It was made after the form of a bedstead, such as was had among the Chaldeans, and it stood before the gods of Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmackran, Korash, and also a god like that of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

That you may have an understanding of these gods, I have given you the fashion of them in the figures at the beginning, which Rahlernos, which signifies hieroglyphics. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, 1:12-14)

Egyptologists have maintained that this scene is from funeral papyri and does not have anything to do with Abraham. Dr. Hugh Nibley states: “Critics have scoffed at Joseph Smith’s declaration that Facsimile 1 is a sacrificial scene, not an embalming scene” (*Improvement Era*, (October 1968, page 73).

Now that the original papyrus fragment from which Joseph Smith copied Facsimile No. 1 has been located we know that it is a scene from the “Book of Breathings.”

### Unfamiliar Writing?

The original fragment has several rows of hieroglyphs which were not included in the printed Facsimile. This writing becomes very significant when we try to determine what the drawing is about. Below is a photograph which shows the hieroglyphs which appear at the two sides of the drawing. There is another row just above the arm of the standing figure, but most of it has broken off.

Dr. Hugh Nibley has claimed that “the inscriptions on the Mormon papyrus are completely different” from those found on a scene which is parallel in several respects to the “Book of Abraham” scene (*Improvement Era*, October 1968, page 79). On page 81 of the same article Dr. Nibley states:

... our manuscript is different. ... we are impressed by the rather massive additions—the unfamiliar writing that frames the scene on either side, and the stage-like foundation of elements found in none of the other papyri. True, every individual sign and figure can be matched rather easily somewhere else, just as every word on this page can be found in almost any English book, but it is the combination of perfectly ordinary signs that makes extraordinary composition. ... the combination here is different.

We feel that this writing deals a fatal blow to the authenticity of the Book of Abraham. It does not relate in any way to Abraham, and it proves conclusively that the scene is from funeral papyri.

Up to this point, Dr. Nibley has not unfolded the “extraordinary” message which he claims is found in this text. Some Mormons apparently fear that the message has nothing to do with Abraham. One Mormon, for instance, wrote a letter which was published in the *Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology* at the Brigham Young University. In this letter he stated: “What was discovered at the Metropolitan Museum is largely standard Egyptian



Photograph from the *Improvement Era*, February 1968, page 40.

writing such as may be found with most of the mummies gotten from Egyptian tombs. . . . some claim that Joseph did not know what he was doing, to explain Facsimile No. 1 as he did. Actually, the writing which surrounds this picture on the original papyrus has **no connection** with either the illustration or the Prophet's "explanation" (Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society of Early Historic Archaeology, March 1, 1968, page 9).

We feel that there is a definite relationship between this writing and the illustration printed as Facsimile No. 1 in the Book of Abraham. The writing proves that the drawing was in reality part of the "Book of Breathings." If the drawing had been done by Abraham, the lines of writing would, no doubt, have had something to say about Abraham or his religion.

Two different studies of the hieroglyphs have appeared. The first was written by Dee Jay Nelson, and was published in *The Joseph Smith Papyri*. Although Mr. Nelson now feels that some of his "conclusions concerning the identification of a few of the characters were incorrect," and intends to present a "complete and accurate translation" in a future publication, his "preliminary" study has been very helpful to us.

The other work was written by Klaus Baer, Associate Professor of Egyptology at the University of Chicago, and appears in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pages 116-117. This is a very valuable piece of work, for Klaus Baer has not only translated the readable hieroglyphs that appear on the papyri, but he has found that this writing was copied by Joseph Smith or his scribe in the "Alphabet and Grammar," and portions which

are now damaged on the original papyrus can still be read in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*.

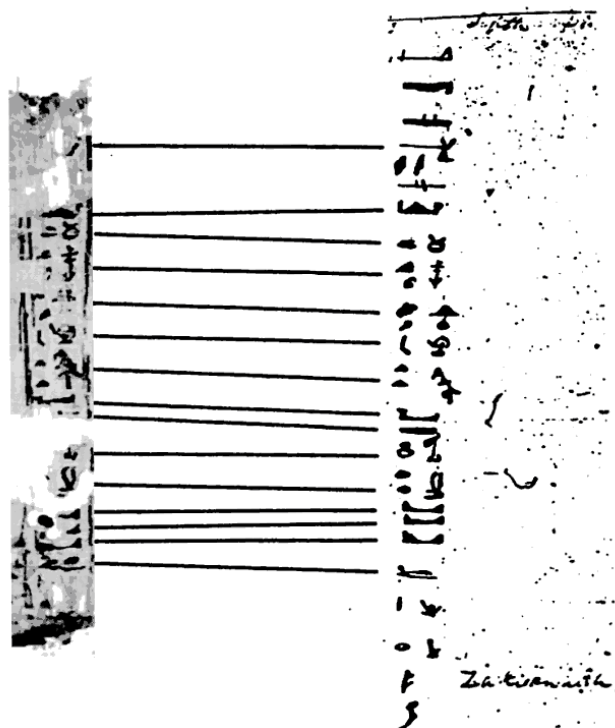
The line which appears on the left side of the fragment of papyrus has been badly damaged since Joseph Smith worked with it, but copies of it have been preserved in at least three places in Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. Below is a photograph of this line from the original papyrus fragment (to the left) compared with the way it appears on one page in the "Alphabet and Grammar" (to the right).

The three lines of hieroglyphs on the right side of the fragment also appear in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*, but they do not provide as much help as the copies of the line on the left side of the fragment.

Klaus Baer gives this translation of the first few characters on the outermost of the three lines of hieroglyphic characters on the right hand side of the fragment: ". . . the prophet of Amonrasontêr, . . ." (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, page 116). Klaus Baer explains that Amonrasontêr means "Amon-Re King of the Gods." James Henry Breasted gives this interesting information concerning Amon-Re:

Amon, the old obscure local god of Thebes, . . . had by this time gained the chief place in the state theology, . . . Theologically, he had long succumbed to the ancient tendency which identified the old local gods with the Sun-god, and he had long been called "Amon-Re." (*Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, page 318)

John A. Wilson, of the University of Chicago, gives this information:



The name Amon meant “Hidden,” so that Amon was an unseen being, a god who might be immanent everywhere. According to one old theological system, Amon, as invisibility, was one of the eight gods of precreation chaos. . . . He came to supersede the gods who had formerly stood for Thebes and to function as the god of the nation. In this capacity he was grafted onto the sun-god Re, as “Amon-Re, King of the Gods.” (*The Culture of Ancient Egypt*, pages 130-131)

In the book, *Bibliothèque Egyptologique publiée sous la Direction de G. Maspero*, Vol. 17, we find the statement that the Book of Breathings “seems to have been deposited exclusively with the mummies of the priests and priestesses of the god Ammon-Ra, if we may judge from the titles inserted into the manuscripts.”

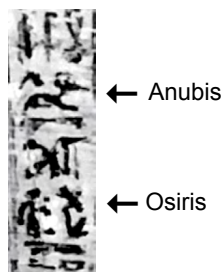
Klaus Baer translates the remaining hieroglyphs in the first line as follows: “. . . prophet [?] of Min Bull-of-his-Mother, prophet [?] of Khons the Governor . . .” Dee Jay Nelson also found the names of the gods Min and Khons (Khonsu) in this column. As we explained earlier, Khons was an Egyptian moon-god, and Min was an ithyphallic god. Thus we find the names of three pagan gods mentioned in the first column.

Klaus Baer reads the second column (going from right to left) as follows: “. . . Hôr, justified, son of the holder of the same titles, master of secrets, and purifier of the gods Osorwêr, justified [?]. . .” Notice that the name Hor appears on this fragment and that this is the same name found in the text of the Book of Breathings. It appears as follows at the top of the second column:



This falcon represents the “falcon-god Horus,” and, as we explained on page 7, it is rendered “Hor” by the Egyptologists who have translated the Mormon Papyri. This man’s name also appears on both of the “Sensen” fragments and on Facsimile No. 3. This indicates that they were all part of the same “Book of Breathings.”

Dee Jay Nelson makes this comment concerning the second column: “Very simple and traditionally ancient forms of the names of Anubis and Osiris are used but both are undeniably correct” (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, page 44). The arrows below point to the places in the column where Anubis and Osiris are shown.



Anubis is represented by a “recumbent dog” or jackal (see *Egyptian Grammar*, by Alan Gardiner, page 459), and Osiris is represented by a seated figure. Similar representations appear in Papyrus No. 3291. This is a copy of the “Book of Breathings” and is written in hieratic. Below is a facsimile of the fourth line of this papyrus as it appears in *Bibliothèque Egyptologique publiée sous la Direction de G. Maspero*, Vol. 17, Plate XII.



The reader may wonder why the word “Anubis” does not appear in Klaus Baer’s translation. Actually, Klaus Baer also sees the recumbent dog or jackal, but he renders this part as a title; “master of secrets.” Alan Gardiner informs us that the same sign which is used to represent the god Anubis is sometimes used as a “sportive” ideogram for the title “he who is over the secrets” (*Egyptian Grammar*, 1964, page 459). This, would, of course, mean the same as “master of secrets.”

Klaus Baer also sees the representation of Osiris, but he uses this as part of the name Osorwêr. He feels that this is the name of Hor’s father, and he explains that this name means “Osiris is Great.” The word that means great appears just to the left of the representation of Osiris. Although it is not too clear on the fragment of papyrus, the copies in *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* make it clear that this is a picture of a man leaning on a stick, and this is the proper sign for the word “great.” It is transliterated as *wr*. The name Osorwêr, therefore, is a combination of the name of the god Osiris and the Egyptian word that means great.

Klaus Baer reads the third line (the line closest to the drawing on the right side) as follows: “. . . Tikhebyt, justified. May your ba live among them, and may you be buried in the West. . . .” The name “Tikhebyt” is the name of Hors mother and is found on the small “Sensen” papyrus.

The fourth line above the arm of the standing figure is almost entirely broken off, and therefore it is not readable.

The fifth line on the left side of the fragment is severely damaged, but because Joseph Smith or his scribe copied it in the “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar” Klaus Baer is able to give us this reading: “May you give to him a good, splendid burial on the West of Thebes just like . . .”

The translation of this fragment shows that it is from a pagan funeral text known as the “Book of Breathings.” The names of Egyptian gods are plainly written on the fragment, and the word “burial” appears twice on this piece of papyrus. It is interesting to note that Klaus Baer



translates the word “Thebes” from the fifth line of the fragment. Dr. Hugh Nibley states that the *Pearl of Great Price* mummies were “found in Thebes” (*Improvement Era*, February 1968, page 21), and Klaus Baer states that “all the known copies” of the Book of Breathings “seem to come” from Thebes (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, page 111). Furthermore, the gods mentioned in the text are the very gods that were worshipped at Thebes. All evidence points to the unescapable conclusion that this is a pagan document and that it could not have been written by Abraham.

## Not Unique

Dr. Hugh Nibley would have us believe that the fragment of papyrus from which Joseph Smith copied Facsimile No. 1 is “A Unique Document.” Dee Jay Nelson, however, makes this statement concerning this scene:

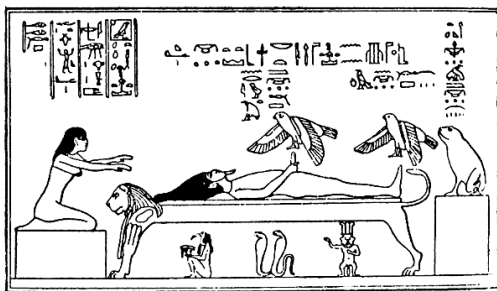
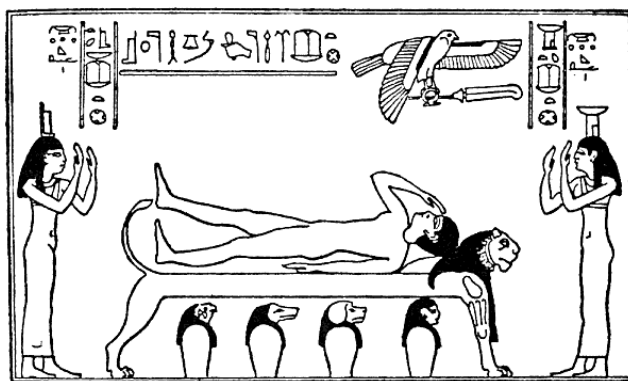
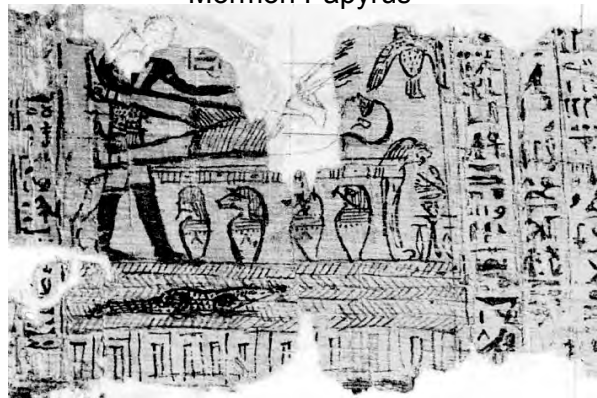
This scene is intimately familiar to me. I have seen it many times. As a matter of fact, in one temple alone, located at Denderah, thirty-seven miles north of Luxor

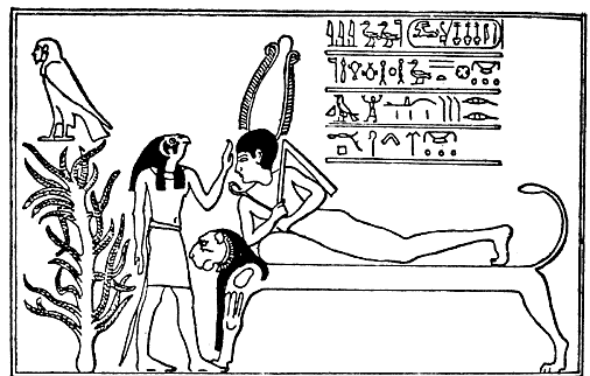
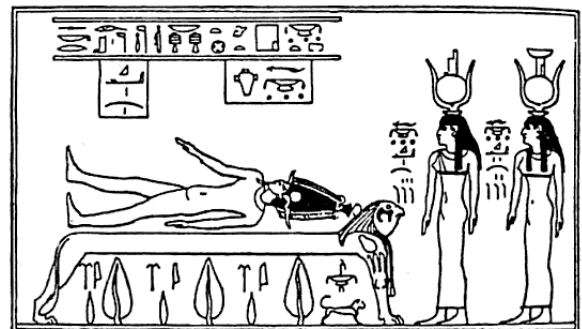
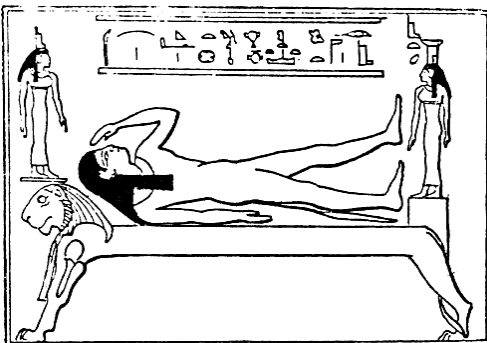
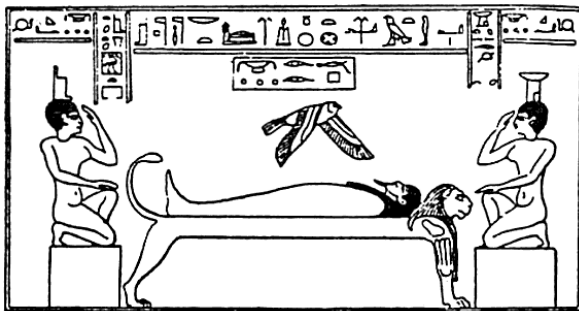
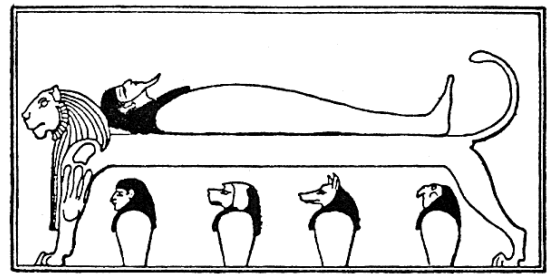
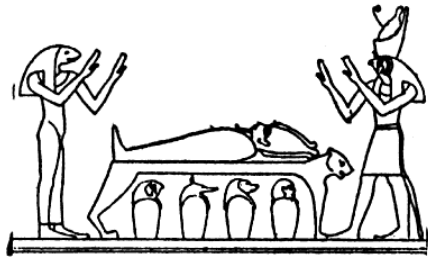
are twenty nine wall bas-reliefs representing Osiris lying upon a lion-headed bier which exactly resembles the one on this papyrus fragment. Five of these even show him with one leg raised above the bed. Two of them also show a jackal-headed god standing near the foot of the bier (behind it) facing the head. One of these has the following similarities. I should say, precise equivalents:

1. The bier has a lions head and an upturned tail.
2. A person is lying on the bier, face up.
3. The hands of the reclining person are held above his face, palms downward (the sign of grief).
4. The reclining figure has his right leg somewhat elevated.
5. A dark figure stands near the foot of the bier facing the head of the couch.
6. A hawk-headed (ba) hovers over the reclining figure. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, page 42)

The scenes which follow are similar to the one found as Facsimile No. 1 in the Book of Abraham. They are taken from several different books. The reader will find most of them in *Osiris—The Egyptian Religion of Resurrection*, by E. A. Wallis Budge, New York, 1961, Vol. 1, page 280 and Vol. 2, pages 21-48.

Mormon Papyrus

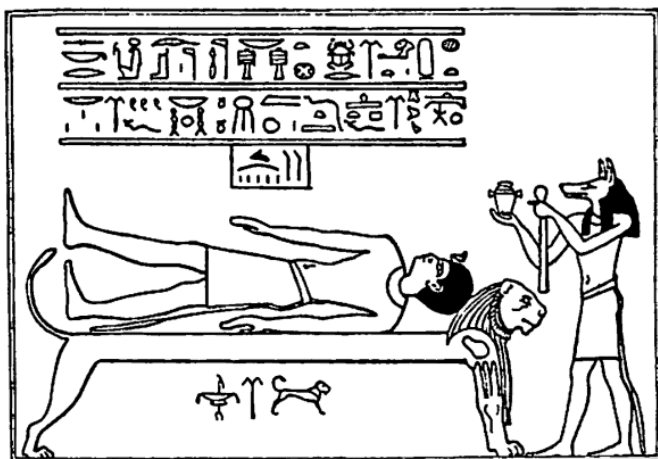




Dr. Nibley goes to great lengths to make it appear that the Mormon Papyrus is different from the other scenes that have been found in Egypt. He states that “on many points our little sketch remains quite unique” (*Improvement Era*, October 1968, page 80). He lists 13 items which make the Mormon Papyrus different from the others. These differences appear to be very insignificant. In one instance Dr. Nibley has made a mistake. He states:

3. How many other scenes show the figure on the couch clothed in the manner here shown? Answer: None. **All are either nude or fully invested as mummies.** (*Improvement Era*, October 1968, page 80)

Dr. Nibley is wrong about this matter. Below is an example from the book, *Osiris—The Egyptian Religion of Resurrection*, Vol. 2, page 33, which proves that Dr. Nibley’s statement is in error.



Klaus Baer makes this statement concerning the fragment of papyrus which is shown as Facsimile No. 1 in the Book of Abraham: “The vignette on P. JS I is unusual, but parallels exist on the walls of the Ptolemaic temples of Egypt, the closest being the scenes in the Osiris chapels on the roof of the Temple of Dendera” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pages 117-118).

### The Interpretation

Egyptologists who have examined the papyrus fragment that Facsimile No. 1 was copied from feel that Joseph Smith’s interpretation of it is incorrect. What Joseph Smith called “Abraham fastened upon an altar”

is in reality Osiris lying upon his bier. The “idolatrous priest of Elkenah” is the god “Anubis” ministering to Osiris. Dee Jay Nelson gives this information concerning the identification of Anubis:

Anubis (Anpu) is traditionally shown on papyri as a black bodied humanoid figure with the head of a jackal (an African wild dog with upraised ears). He usually is shown wearing a scale armor corselet. Note that the standing figure in the Ter [Hor] Illustration has a spotted garment which shows just below Osiris’ upraised leg. I believe this is the artist’s crude representation of armor scale. Anubis was the god of embalming, the guardian of the cemetery and manipulated the balance scales of truth in the Judgement Hall. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, page 45)

Klaus Baer also feels that this is Anubis:

The identification is assured by the black color of the body and many parallels. e.g., Mariette, Denderah, IV, pl. 70-71 and the counts examples of Anubis attending a mummy on a lion-couch (BD 151 and often elsewhere). He is, of course, not holding a knife. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, page 118)

The Egyptians believed that Osiris was killed by his brother Set. The body was found by Isis, and he was embalmed by Anubis. Osiris was resurrected and became the God of the Dead.

The four jars which appear below the bier in Facsimile No. 1 prove that it is a funerary scene. These canopic jars were used to hold the soft parts of the body that were removed during the embalming process. (Notice that they appear in some of the other scenes we have shown.) Joseph Smith’s statement that they are the gods of Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmackrah, and Korash is completely wrong. Dee Jay Nelson states:

Two of the Denderah wall drawings show canopic jars with humanoid and animalistic heads below the bier. They appear in exactly the same order . . . human-headed Amset first (at the left). Behind him are the following in this order, baboon-headed Hapy, jackal-headed Duamutef and hawk-headed Qebhsenuf. These jars traditionally received the internal organs of a deceased person. The gods depicted on the lids of these jars were the protectors of various visceral parts. These are entirely typical. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, page 42)

R. C. Webb, who defended the Mormon position concerning the Book of Abraham, admitted that the four jars resembled canopic jars used in the embalming process:

... these figures, both in shape and position accord with those of the "Canopic vases," containers for the viscera of mummied deceased. In fact, they have contributed the most cogent evidence, in the eyes of Egyptological critics, that we have here only a variation of such familiar **funerary scenes** as have been specified already. (*Joseph Smith as a Translator*, Salt Lake City, 1936, page 141)

## Changes in Facsimile

Egyptologists have always claimed that the Mormons altered the scene shown in Facsimile No. 1. They claim that the standing figure (Anubis) should have a jackal's head instead of a human head. Some Egyptologists claim that the knife has been added into the hand of Anubis and that the bird should have a human head. The charge that the Mormons altered this scene was made a century ago by Theodule Deveria. In his interpretation of Facsimile No. 1 he stated:

Fig. 1. The soul of Osiris, under the form of a hawk (which **should have a human head**).

Fig. 2. Osiris coming to life on his funeral couch, which is the shape of a lion.

Fig. 3. The god Anubis (who **should have a jackal's head**) effecting the resurrection of Osiris. (*A Journey to Great Salt Lake City*, Vol. 2, as quoted in *Deseret News*, January 4, 1913)

In 1912 Dr. Albert M. Lythgoe, head of the Department of Egyptian Art of the Metropolitan Museum, made a similar charge:

Dr. Lythgoe took up some of the slight discrepancies in the Mormon pictures from the Egyptian originals. He expressed the wish that he might see the original papyrus that the Prophet Smith translated or a photograph of it, instead of drawings made from it. In the first of the Mormon figures the god Anubis, bending over the mummy, was shown with a Human and a strangely un-Egyptian head, instead of the jackal's head usual to such a scene. And a knife had been drawn into the god's hand. (*New York Times*, Magazine Section, December 29, 1912)

Samuel A. B. Mercer stated:

It has, indeed, been questioned whether the head on figure 3 is genuine. A question has also been raised as to the genuineness of the knife in the hand. These questions are quite legitimate in the light of our knowledge of Egyptian art. (*The Utah Survey*, Vol. 1, no. 1, September 1913, pages 18-19)

In 1966 the Egyptologists John A. Wilson and Richard A. Parker still maintained that Facsimile No. 1 had been altered. John A. Wilson stated: "The head of the god has been miscopied as human and should be that of a jackal" (Letter dated March 16, 1966). Richard A. Parker stated:

"Number 1 is an **altered** copy of a well known scene of the dead god Osiris on his bier with a jackal-god Anubis acting as his embalmer" (Letter dated March 22, 1966).

R. C. Webb, the apologist for the Mormons, made these comments in regard to the charge that the Mormons had made alterations in the Egyptian material found in the Book of Abraham:

... several critics have alleged that important alterations, or "falsifications," have been made, in several designated particulars—...

The "expert opinions" of the several Egyptologists, rendered at various times, have been repeated frequently, ... It seems desirable, however, to notice them again, if only for the purpose of justifying our claim that Egyptological science, to date, at any rate, has been unable to discredit the traditional captions, or to justify the universal claim of "alterations"...

The uncertainties which these Egyptologists leave behind them relate to several important considerations: (1) whether the standing figure, as either Anubis or a priest, should have a jackal's head, and why it should have been changed to its present form; (2) whether the flying bird should represent the man's "soul" (in which case it need not have a human head) or Isis, "in the form of a hawk" (who need not have a human head); (3) whether the "knife" in the hand of the standing figure has been "draw into" it, as one authority holds, or whether it is an original feature, as two others assume—one distinctly mentioning—without further comment. (*Joseph Smith as a Translator*, by R. C. Webb, 1936, pages 118, 121 and 127).

R. C. Webb also stated:

... unless these drawings have been altered in several essential particulars, ... they do not represent the common run of illustrations in the Book of the Dead, ... If there is no evidence that they were not altered in copying, there is also no evidence that they were so altered. ... There are numerous representations of Anubis, "protector of the dead," standing beside the corpse or mummy on its bier. It may be safe to assert, however, that, in all such drawings, Anubis is shown in the conventional manner, having a jackal's head with elongated snout, **never with a human head**. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, page 437)

In the *Improvement Era*, Vol. 17, page 319, "Dr. Webb" stated:

Thus, Dr. Petrie calls the standing figure "Anubis," but he does not refer us to genuine examples in which that god is shown with **a human instead of a jackal's head**. Dr. Breasted's note on the attempted "reconciliation" between the diverse judgments, "Anubis" and "priest," stating that "the officiating priest wears the head of a wolf or jackal to impersonate Anubis," adds nothing to our enlightenment, because the figure in question is **wearing no such head**.

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made these sarcastic comments concerning the charge that the Mormons had altered the facsimiles:

To these diverse interpretations of this figure 1, I add that of M. Deveria: "The soul of Osiris, under the form of a hawk." He also adds, in parenthesis, that the hawk "should have a human head." Yes, **or the head of an ass**, then it could be made to mean **something else** than what these other learned men describe it as meaning. . . . Petrie makes no complaint against the form of "figure 3," but Deveria insists that he "should have a jackal's head." Yes, or **some other change** might be suggested, and by such process some other meaning may be read into the plate and make it different from the translation of Joseph Smith. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, page 321)

At the time these comments were written, the original papyrus from which Facsimile No. 1 was drawn was not available. Therefore, B. H. Roberts and "Dr. Webb" were able to criticize the Egyptologists for claiming that alterations had been made. Now that the papyrus has been located, the entire picture has changed. The Mormon position has been considerably weakened because the portions of the papyrus which have been in question—i.e., the parts that would have contained the head of Anubis, the head of the bird, and the knife—are missing! (See photograph on page 32.)

Dr. Aziz S. Atiya, the man who found the papyri, made this statement:

" . . . I went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art looking for documents, . . . While there I found a file with these documents. . . . When I saw this picture, I knew that it had appeared in the *Pearl of Great Price*. . . . This kind of picture one can find generally on other papyri, but this particular one has special peculiarities. For instance, the **head had fallen off**, and I could see that the papyrus was stuck on paper, **nineteenth century paper**. The **head was completed in pencil**, apparently by Joseph Smith, who must have had it when that part fell off. He apparently drew the head in his own hand on the supplementary paper. . . .

"In order to protect the papyrus, which becomes brittle with age—for instance, the head of the person fell off simply because the papyrus was brittle—Joseph Smith probably thought that the best thing for its protection was to glue it on paper." (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, pages 13-14)

Dee Jay Nelson makes this comment concerning the portions that have been sketched in on the "nineteenth century paper" on which the papyrus is mounted:

On the backing paper the missing part of the body and arms of the person on the bier and the shoulder and head of the standing figure have been crudely sketched in. This was presumably done by Joseph Smith or certainly by some individual in the Nineteenth Century. Note that the face of the standing personage is facing forward. . . .

I am compelled to the opinion that this is an erroneous reconstruction of the head. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, page 42)

We do not feel that Joseph Smith or his scribe would have completed the head in pencil if the original head was still available. Rather than complete the drawing in pencil, he would have pasted the original piece of papyrus which contained the head in its proper place. This would be true unless he desired to alter the head and destroy the evidence. We do not believe this to be the case, however.

The reader can see that whoever drew the missing portions of the papyrus on the paper beneath (see page 32), reconstructed the scene in a different manner than it appears in the Book of Abraham. The head appears to be off to one side and facing forward, and the knife seems to be in the other hand, up by the head. This would seem to show that the reconstruction was merely guess-work. Dr. Nibley tries to show that the "pencilled restoration" was done by a non-Mormon (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, pages 72 and 80), but his arguments are very weak.

Klaus Baer makes this interesting statement concerning the condition of the papyrus at the time Joseph Smith worked with it:

Is there any evidence for the condition of the vignette of "Facsimile No. 1" in Joseph Smith's time? The cut shows it complete, but we have already seen that Joseph Smith attempted to fill lacunae in his copy of the texts. Is this the case here also? There is no direct evidence, but line 4 is an indication. One would have expected it to appear in the "Facsimile" and in the copies in *EAG* if more had existed than the insignificant remnant now visible—the hieroglyphs are included in "Facsimile No. 3."

The sketch in the lacuna is a stronger argument. The head and shoulders of the standing figure (3) are quite different in "Facsimile No. 1" and on the backing of P. JS I. Neither can be a copy of the other, and they diverge too much to be copies of the same original. If the sketch were later than the cut in *PGP*, one would expect it to resemble the "Facsimile"; if, on the other hand, Joseph Smith had drawn it himself (or had it drawn) in order to replace a part of the papyrus that had been damaged after it came into his possession, one would still expect the two versions to resemble each other. The likeliest interpretation of the difference is that the sketch on the backing fills an already existing gap in a manner that Joseph Smith himself rejected as unsatisfactory. In addition, as we have already seen, the Egyptian parallels to the missing portions of the vignette resemble neither the sketch nor "Facsimile No. 1." The human-headed bird (1) would hardly have been drawn with a bird's head in *PGP* if more of the papyrus had been preserved when the woodcut was made. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pages 132-133)

On page 118, footnote 31, of the same article, Klaus Baer states:



... the vignette was probably in essentially the same condition in 1835 that it is now, and the restorations, both that sketched on the backing and that in “Facsimile No. 1” in the *PGP*, are not copies of the missing parts.

Dr. Nibley makes this comment concerning the charge that Facsimile No. 1 has been altered:

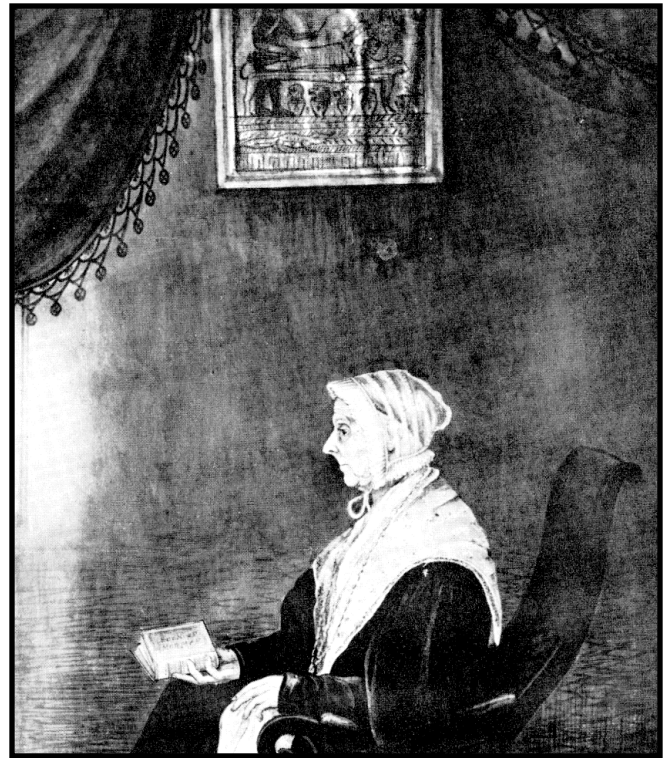
1. It is significant that the charge of false copying today centers on those parts of the document which happen to be missing, and thus offends the first principle of textual criticism, which is, always to give a document the benefit of the doubt. If the copyist is perfectly reliable in the four-fifths of the sketch that have survived, why should he go berserk in the particular fifth that is missing? (*Improvement Era*, September 1963, page 74)

We feel that Dr. Nibley is overlooking important evidence concerning Joseph Smith’s method of working with these documents. For instance, we have shown that the portions of Facsimile No. 2 which were missing on the original document were filled in from other documents (see pages 16-19 of this volume). In Vol. 2 of *The Case Against Mormonism* we proved that Joseph Smith also made false restorations in the “Sensen” papyrus. Since Joseph Smith was responsible for falsification in the other documents, why should we believe that he would perform differently with regard to Facsimile No. 1? In *The Case*, Vol. 2, page 173, we quoted William S. West as stating that the papyri “were torn by being taken from the roll of embalming salve which contained them, and **some parts entirely lost** . . .” This statement was printed just two years after Joseph Smith obtained the papyri.

We feel that the evidence shows that the papyri were in damaged condition at the time Joseph Smith worked with them, and since the areas which the Egyptologists questioned on Facsimile No. 1 turn out to be the very areas that are missing on the papyrus, we are convinced that Joseph Smith was guilty of making imaginative restorations in Facsimile No. 1.

### An Old Portrait

In a desperate attempt to save the Book of Abraham, Dr. Nibley claimed that “an old portrait” of Joseph Smith’s mother proves that Facsimile No. 1 has not been altered. Following is a photograph of this drawing taken from the *Improvement Era*, September 1968, page 70.



Dr. Nibley makes this statement concerning this portrait:

6. An Impartial Witness: Further evidence that Facsimile 1 has been **honestly reproduced** is found in an early independent copy of it by an artist (very probably non-Mormon) who was using it for purely decorative purposes and without the intention of proving anything. It is to be found in an old portrait of Lucy Mack Smith, the Prophet’s mother, . . .

In 1942 President George Albert Smith, . . . visited a relative, Salisbury Smith, . . . Mr. Smith took the brethren to a farm near Carthage to see “Aunt Clara,” the 83-year-old daughter of Lucy, the youngest daughter of Lucy Mack Smith. She showed them a picture of her grandmother, which she said she had inherited from her mother. She refused to part with the picture but allowed the brethren to have it photographed, and the photo now hangs on the walls of the Church Historian’s Office in Salt Lake City.

In the portrait the artist has decorated the wall space behind his subject with her most prized possession—the original of Facsimile 1. He has used his artist’s license to enlarge the object both for decorative effect (the original is no larger than a postcard, being a square of only 4 1/4 inches on a side) and to preserve clarity of detail. But there can be no doubt that it is the original papyrus hanging on the wall, for the artist has taken pains to show the bent and wrinkled surface—a copy would be mounted smoothly and evenly. Moreover, the frame depicted is like the one that still encloses some of the other papyri now in possession of the Church. That is, the rather elegant frames were used for displaying original and valuable documents, and Mrs. Smith would certainly not have gone to the expense and trouble of framing, and then have proudly displayed, a printed copy of no value whatever (they existed by the

thousands) while she still had the original in her possession. The artist, like Hedlock, has done the reasonable thing and not bothered to fight with the problem of the legs; what interested him was to get a good likeness of Mrs. Smith and her impressive document (the Egyptian things were always her special concern), and in so doing he has given us a rapid, fairly accurate, and unbiased sketch of what the papyrus looked like, before it was damaged. It matches our printed reproductions, and not the proposed restoration. (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, page 78)

Even though the photograph Dr. Nibley included in the *Improvement Era* was not clear, there were a number of reasons for believing that it was not a drawing of the original papyrus. To begin with, the portrait does not include the four lines of hieroglyphic writing found at the sides of the original papyrus (see photograph of original papyrus on page 32 of this volume). Dee Jay Nelson made this interesting observation:

The fragile nature of the ancient papyrus would not have allowed the sides to be folded under without breaking them. The original fragment could not have otherwise been framed as it is seen in the portrait. (Letter dated September 15, 1968)

A close examination of the photograph published in the *Improvement Era* revealed that numbers were present on the drawing. Dee Jay Nelson stated:

I examined the half-tone *Era* print under a low power microscope and found that even through the screening of the photograph one can distinguish Figure numbers designating the various elements and that these numbers appear exactly in those locations where they are found upon this Facsimile in printed editions of the Book of Abraham. The numbers 2, 8 and 11 are the most definite. On a photograph . . . rather than a half-tone print they should be even more evident. This indicated that it is **a print** hanging on the wall and not the original papyrus fragment.

Although we were convinced that numbers were on the photograph which appeared in the *Improvement Era*, we felt that it would be hard to convince others since the reproduction was so unclear. We felt that a good photograph of the original portrait would prove Dr. Nibley's argument untrue.

Michael Marquardt began to do research with regard to this matter. His findings were sent to Wesley P. Walters (who has done so much for us in the past). Mr. Walters continued to do research and finally found the original portrait in the possession of Charles W. Boyd in Chicago, Illinois. Wesley Walters has photographed this portrait and has allowed us to use it. On the next page the reader will see a photograph of this painting. It is very obvious from this photograph that the numbers which appear in the published version of the Book of Abraham (see photograph on page 31) are visible in this photograph. They appear in exactly the same places as on the printed

version. The numbers which are most obvious are: 1, to the right of the bird's head; 2, under the knife; 3, to the left of the standing figure; 7, on the second jar from the left; 8, between the first and second jar; 9, on the crocodile; 11, below the mouth of the crocodile.

Since these numbers do not appear on the original papyrus (see photograph on page 32 of this volume) and were added to the printed copies to explain the drawing, this could not possibly be a drawing of the original papyrus. Thus we see that the statement that this is the "**original papyrus** hanging on the wall" has been proven untrue.

Dr. Nibley claims that "there can be no doubt that it is the original papyrus hanging on the wall, for the artist has taken pains to show the bent and wrinkled surface—a copy would be mounted smoothly and evenly." Dr. Nibley has made an error with regard to this matter, for even the photograph printed in the *Improvement Era* shows the wrinkles going into the frame which holds the Facsimile. Wesley P. Walters has found that these are wrinkles in the portrait itself not an attempt by the artist to represent wrinkles in the papyrus. He has taken a photograph of the portrait from the side which clearly shows that this is the case. In fact, one of the wrinkles extends down past the frame and into the wall!

Dr. Nibley was asked to retract his false statements concerning the portrait, but so far no statement has appeared. Nevertheless, the editors of the *Improvement Era* evidently realized that Dr. Nibley made a serious mistake, for they have allowed a letter to be printed in their publication which shows Dr. Nibley was wrong about the portrait. The letter was written by James Boyack and contains some excellent observations. In this letter Mr. Boyack states:

. . . he [Dr. Nibley] may have been a little over-anxious to find corroborative evidence. A careful look at the drawing shown in the painting shows that it differs in several details from the original but agrees in each case with the facsimile:

1. The standing figure is behind the couch in the painting and the facsimile but between the couch and the legs of the reclining figure in the original.

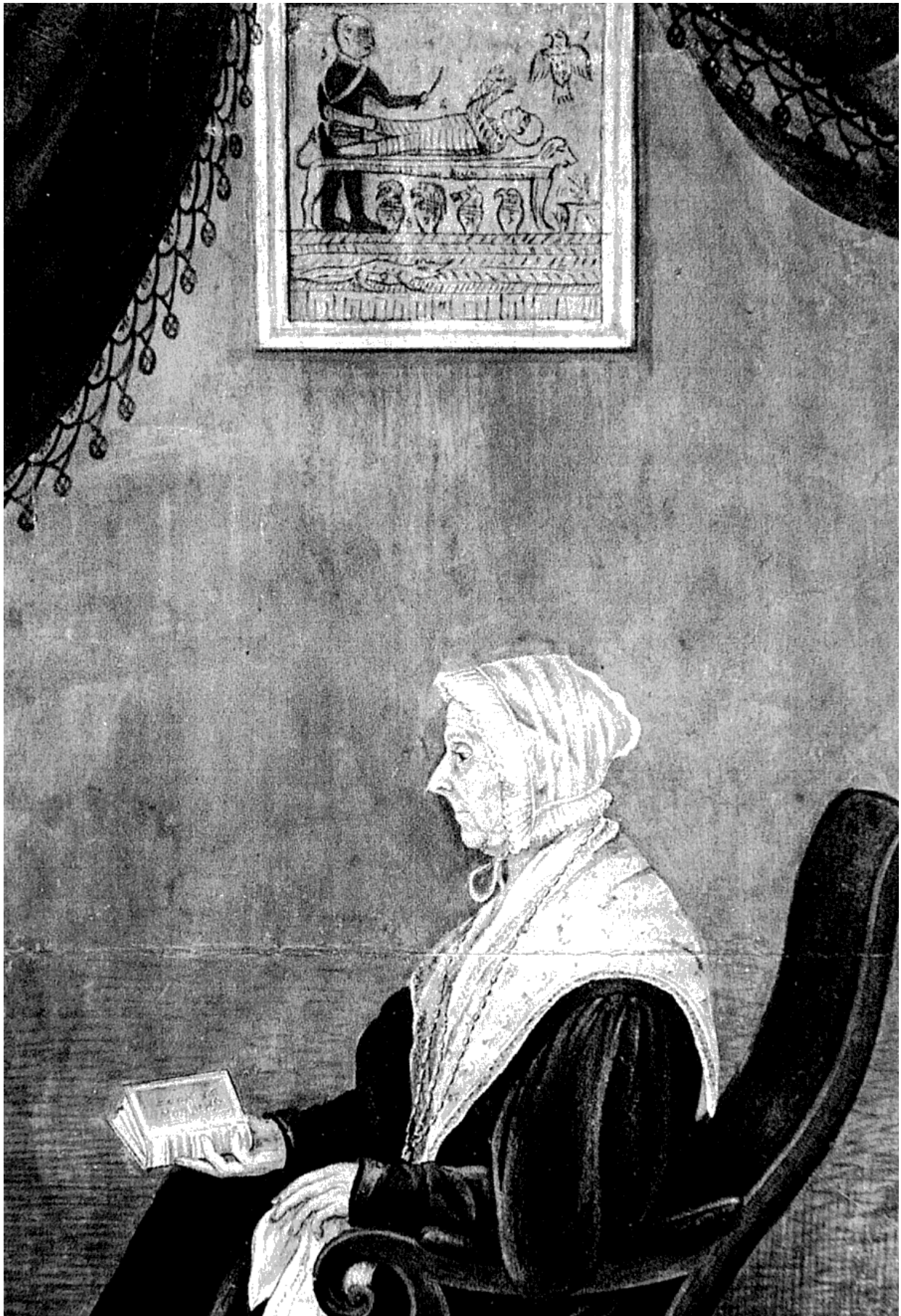
2. The toe of the upper foot and all of the lower foot of the reclining figure are filled in black in the painting and the facsimile, but are only outlined in the original.

3. The original shows a box of writing, which would have been even more imposing if the missing pieces were present, above the arm of the standing figure, but both the facsimile and the painting leave this out.

4. The toe of the forward foot of the standing figure covers the bottom of the first jar in the painting and the facsimile but not in the original.

5. In both the painting and the facsimile there is a white stripe that runs diagonally across the chest of the standing figure and is joined at the shoulder by a second stripe, which appears to form a sort of collar; if there was a second stripe in the original, it would have joined the first at the chest, not at the shoulder.





6. Both the painting and the facsimile display numerals in the same places, which designate the various figures, but these numerals do not appear on the original.

7. The photograph of the original shows no indication of having been folded after the papyrus was mounted, yet the representation in the painting does not include the hieroglyphics on the right and left sides of the original.

All this indicates that the artist painted a framed facsimile hanging behind Joseph Smith's mother and not the original papyrus. (Letter in the *Improvement Era*, December 1968, page 122)

The fact that the *Improvement Era* would print such a letter shows that Dr. Nibley is in serious trouble in his attempt to defend the Book of Abraham.

Dr. Nibley tries to find evidence that Facsimile No. 1 was not altered in a letter written by Warren Parrish:

Thus, in a letter written on February 5, 1838, at Kirtland, in an all-out attempt to expose Joseph Smith as a fraud, Warren Parrish writes: "I have set by his side and penned down the translation of the Egyptian Hieroglyphicks as he claimed to receive it by direct inspiration from heaven." Here was a man in a position to detect any manipulation or trickery in the composing of the Book of Abraham, and eager to expose such; yet he, like everybody else, seems completely unaware of the outrageous discrepancy between the original document and the printed copies of it that the present explanation of Facsimile 1 requires. (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, pages 77-78)

We feel the Warren Parrish letter does not prove anything regarding Facsimile No. 1. According to Dr. Nibley's own statement, Warren Parrish wrote his letter in 1838, yet Dr. Nibley states that the "first engravings" were "published in 1842" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, page 177). How could Mr. Parrish have been aware of any "discrepancy between the original document and the printed copies of it" when the Facsimile had not yet been printed? If Warren Parrish's letter had been dated five years later, Dr. Nibley might have had a point, but since the Facsimile had not been printed, the letter proves nothing.

### Missing parts

We have shown that a century ago the Egyptologist M. Theodule Deveria claimed that the bird which Joseph Smith called "The Angel of the Lord" should have a human head. Although most of the portion of the original papyrus which should contain the bird's head is broken away, Dee Jay Nelson feels that enough remains to show that it did have a human head. He states:

From what remains of the head of the bird (ba) I am reasonably sure that, unlike the cut in the Book of Abraham, this bird had a human head. I am led to this belief by the downward curving stroke just above the right wing of the bird. Egyptian artists often thus indicated, by a single pen stroke, the human beard. Similar drawings in extant papyri and on Egyptian temple walls represent the ba or soul of the deceased hovering near the corpse. Most of these represent the ba as a bird with a human head, however, many examples of it with a bird's head are known. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, by Dee Jay Nelson, page 42)

Dr. Hugh Nibley admits that the bird's head was broken off before the papyrus was mounted but he claims that what remains shows that the drawing in the Book of Abraham is right:

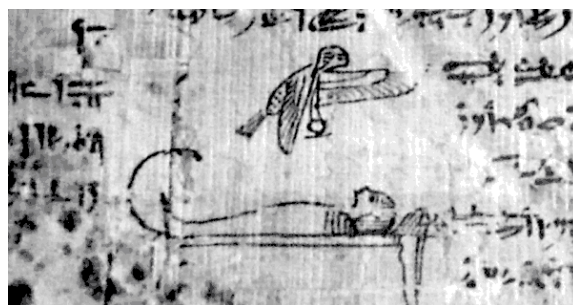
The earliest and latest scholarly critics of the facsimiles have insisted that the bird in Facsimile 1 should have a human head. Though the bird's head, being on the edge of the papyrus, was broken off even before it was mounted, enough of the neck fortunately remains to show that it never bore a human head. And so the original again comes to the rescue to refute the Approved School Solution. (*Improvement Era*, October 1968, page 73)

Klaus Baer, on the other hand, feels that the papyrus shows a human head:

So far as I know, Nelson, *The Joseph Smith Papyri*, page 42, was the first to point out that the bird above the head of Osiris clearly has a human head and therefore must be his ba. In "Facsimile No. 1," it is drawn with a falcon's head, . . . (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, page 118, footnote 34)

We feel that the bird probably had a human head, but the papyrus is so badly damaged that it is hard to tell for certain. Another drawing of the bird seems to appear in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*, on the same page with the serpent on legs, but because it is unclear it does not provide much help. A drawing of one of the canopic jars seems to appear at the side of the bird. E. A. Wallis Budge states that the soul (ba) of a man "was represented by a bird with a bearded human head" (*Osiris*, Vol. 2, page 129).

It is interesting to note that one of the fragments of papyri which were in Joseph Smith's possession did have a bird with a human head above the mummy on a bier. Below is a photograph of this scene.





While most Egyptologists have stated that the bird shown in Facsimile No. 1 is the soul of the deceased, others have suggested that it may be “Isis” or “Nephthys, sister to Osiris and Isis.” This is also a reasonable explanation, for, according to an Egyptian myth, Isis and Nephthys assume the form of birds to search for Osiris. James Henry Breasted states:

Nephthys frequently accompanies her sister in the long search, both of them being in the form of birds. “Isis comes, Nephthys comes, one of them on the right, one of them on the left, one of them as a het-bird, one of them as a falcon. They have found Osiris, as his brother Set felled him to the earth in Nedyt.” (*Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, page 27)

Richard A. Parker has suggested that there was originally a second bird shown in Facsimile No. 1, but that it has broken away. He feels that what Joseph Smith thought was the upper hand of Abraham is in reality the wingtip of the second bird (see *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, page 86). According to his interpretation, Osiris was originally shown as ithyphallic, with Isis hovering over him in the form of a bird. He states that Isis “is magically impregnated by the dead Osiris and then later gives birth to Horus who avenges his father and takes over his inheritance.” Klaus Baer states:

There are some problems about restoring the missing parts of the body of Osiris. He was almost certainly represented as ithyphallic, ready to beget Horus, as in many of the scenes at Dendera. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, page 119)

Dr. Hugh Nibley states that there are “a number of procreation scenes in which the mummy is begetting his divine successor or reincarnation” (*Improvement Era*, October 1968, page 78), but he argues vigorously against the idea that Facsimile No. 1 was originally such a scene:

We must bear in mind that the alterations that Professor Parker’s interpretation requires—the jackal’s mask of the priest, the hovering bird, and the reproductive activities indicated—not only occupy the most conspicuous position, front and center, on the Number 1 papyrus, but by their unusual, not to say shocking nature (and many visitors to Nauvoo were looking for something shocking), would be most certain to command the attention of any observer. How does it happen that during all the years when the papyri were being shown by old Sister Lucy Mack Smith for a small admission fee to any interested parties, nobody ever noticed that they differed drastically from the well-known printed copies that the visitor was invited to take away with him? (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, page 77)

If this was a procreation scene we feel that it was probably damaged in this area before Joseph Smith obtained it.

However this may be, many of the scenes which we have shown have one or more birds in them. The presence of the bird in Facsimile No. 1 tends to confirm the idea that it is an Egyptian funerary scene. Even R. C. Webb had to admit that the bird would make good sense in an Egyptian funerary text:

Another notable figure in this plate is the flying bird, marked 1. Joseph Smith calls it “the angel of the Lord,” but it is notable that it is not identified with a dove, or other sacred emblem. The authorities quoted in Spalding’s pamphlet call this figure “the hawk of Horus”; “a bird, in which form Isis is represented”; “the soul (Kos) flying away in the shape of the bird,” and “Isis.” Any one of these explanations is perfectly logical and consistent on the supposition that the scene is one from the Book of the Dead, or some other mortuary work of the Egyptians, although the form and position of the figure differ widely from conventional usage. The “hawk of Horus,” usually considered as a representation of Isis, who, according to the fable, gave birth to Horus in the form of a hawk, is often shown in mortuary pictures, . . . Furthermore, the conventional representation of the “soul flying away in the form of a bird” shows a human head on its shoulders, and the wings similarly on the down stroke. So much for the conventional manner of representing the flying bird in such connections. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, March 1913, page 441)

We have quoted Dr. Albert M. Lythgoe, who was head of the Department of Egyptian Art at the Metropolitan Museum, as stating that the “knife had been drawn into the god’s hand.” Since the area on the original papyrus which should show the knife has broken away, and since the penciled restoration shows the knife in the other hand, we suspect that it did not appear on the original papyrus.

Henry Caswall, who saw the original of Facsimile No. 1 in Nauvoo, claimed that the “storekeeper” who showed him the original papyrus told him the following:

Pointing to the figure of a man lying on a table, he said, “That is the picture of Abraham on the point of being sacrificed. That man standing by him with a drawn knife is an idolatrous priest of the Egyptians.” (*The City of the Mormons; or, Three Days at Nauvoo, in 1842*, by Rev. Henry Caswall, 1842, pages 22-23)

Since the word “drawn” could be understood in two different ways, Mr. Caswall’s statement does not help us much. Whether Henry Caswall was referring to the pencilled restoration or something on the papyrus itself is open to debate. The penciled restoration was probably made before Caswall visited Nauvoo, for his book was published the same year as the Facsimiles—1842. If the penciled restoration was a first attempt to restore the missing parts, it had to be made before the Book of Abraham was printed in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842.

We must also consider the possibility that the standing figure may have had something in his hand that resembled a knife. In the example shown on page 37 of this volume the reader will see the standing figure “bringing unguent and linen to embalm” the man lying on the bier. If the scene was poorly drawn someone unfamiliar with Egyptian art might mistake the linen for a knife.

Mormon scholars were no doubt very disappointed to find that the head of the standing figure was missing on the original papyrus. They had made such a point of the fact that Facsimile No. 1 had a human head rather than the head of a jackal. Egyptologists, on the other hand, are now more confident than ever that the standing figure is Anubis. John A. Wilson, who had stated that “the head of the god has been miscopied as human and should be that of a jackal,” made this comment after he saw a photograph of the original papyrus:

Finally, you want to know about the embalming scene and I am comforted to see that the standing figure has no head. I am sure that it never had a human head, as all of these illustrations show an animal head. In Ryerson, Pl. XLVIII, the vignette for B. D. 151 shows the jackal-god Anubis bending over a couch, with his hands on a recumbent human figure. (Letter from John A. Wilson, dated January 5, 1968)

## Not Sacrificial

There are two things which have led Mormon apologists to believe that Facsimile No. 1 might be a sacrificial scene. One is the knife in the hand of the standing figure, and the other is the active state of the man who is lying on the bier.

We have shown, however, that the knife was probably added by Joseph Smith and did not appear on the original papyrus. Dr. Nibley would like us to believe that the knife appeared on the original papyrus, but he weakens his own position when he states that a knife would fit “nicely into an embalming scene”:

5. And then there is the matter of the knife. Since Professor Parker’s attention was directed entirely to photographs of the papyrus, as was proper, and not to the facsimile, he makes no mention of the knife in the priest’s hand. Of course, if his interpretation is correct, then there was no knife, and we must allow Dr. Lythgoe’s claim that the Mormons have drawn it into the hand of the priest. But the other experts saw nothing wrong with the knife. Back in 1903 Budge’s colleague at the British Museum, Henry Woodward, saw in Facsimile 1 “an embalmer, knife in hand, preparing to disembowel a dead body to embalm it!” Von Bissing saw “the soul leaving the body the moment when the priest is opening the body with a knife for mummification.” And at the present time Professor George R. Hughes of the Oriental

Institute at Chicago obliges with an explanation: “The embalming of a deceased person, or rather the operation preparatory to mummification. (1) The deceased’s soul or spirit . . . it is usually shown as a human-headed bird. . . . [Fac. 1, Fig. 3] is the embalmer-priest who is usually shown wearing a jackal-headed mask. . . . He has in his hand a knife ready to make an incision in the abdomen.”

Thus, the knife remains a respectable object and fits nicely into an embalming scene. (*Improvement Era*, October 1968, pages 75-76)

There is one scene of Osiris on his bier which could very easily be mistaken for a sacrificial scene, for the standing figure appears to be pointing a spear at the head of the man on the bier. Below is a copy of this.



E. A. Wallis Budge explains, however; that this is “Horus opening the mouth and two eyes of Osiris with a spear” (*Osiris—The Egyptian Religion of Resurrection*, Vol. 2, page 54). In other words, Horus is performing a necessary operation for Osiris.

The other feature in Facsimile No. 1 that has confused some people is the fact that the man on the bier “represents a very life-like attitude for a corpse” (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, 1913, page 321). The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts states:

. . . the whole scene is too animated for the embalming of the dead. The main figure on the bedstead-like altar, with both hands raised in protest, and one foot up, is evidently not ready for the supposed embalming process that Petrie and Peters think is under way. It should be observed, too, that the figure to be “embalmed” is clothed, and presumably in his right mind judging from the expression of the open and rather intelligent expression of the eye. It is more like a book of the living than of the “dead;” more like resistance to an assassin, as Joseph Smith depicts it, an attempt to offer the patriarch Abraham as a sacrifice to false gods—than either an embalming scene or a resurrection. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, 1913, page 320)

At first “Dr. Webb” maintained that the scene in Facsimile No. 1 was unique because there was no other scene in which the dead man had his limbs elevated as shown in the Book of Abraham:

Furthermore, in all such scenes, the dead lies in perfectly composed position, also flat upon the couch, any such elevation of the limbs, or raising of the body,

as is shown in the Book of Abraham plate, being entirely unknown. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, 1913, page 437)

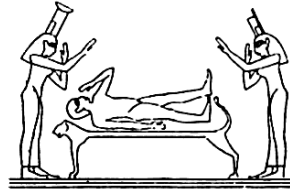
In September of 1913 Samuel A. B. Mercer showed that “Dr. Webb” was wrong about this matter:

As a rule, in the many similar Egyptian scenes, the mummy is represented as inactive. It was the usual scene which the majority of the scholars had in mind when commenting upon the figure. There are, however, a few scenes which are more like the one copied by the prophet, in which the mummy is represented as active. For an example see George Benedite, *Le Temple de Philal*, xl. . . . The Prophet’s interpretation, “Abraham fastened upon an altar,” is simply guess work. No one would ever take the figure to be that of the patriarch Abraham. . . . Dr. Webb loves to be exact—perhaps he will inform us why the Prophet referred to Abraham as “fastened” upon the altar. The fastenings surely do not appear in the fac-simile. . . . Dr. Webb’s discussion of the plates in the *Deseret Evening News*, January 18, 1913, is simply a patchwork of “woulds,” “coulds,” and “althoughs,” and his assertion that the attitude of Osiris with elevated limbs is “entirely unknown” is false, as anyone can see by looking into Benedite’s work, quoted above. (*The Utah Survey*, Vol. 1, no. 1, September 1913, pages 18 and 20)

Since Mercer cited an actual example “Dr. Webb” was defeated. In a later article “Dr. Webb” no longer claimed the scene was “entirely unknown.” Instead, he maintained that it was “quite exceptional” in funeral papyri. Although he claimed that Mercer was wrong in using the word “mummy” he admitted that it was the “body of the dead”:

It is only fair to state that the scene referred to does not show the “mummy” as active, nor any mummy at all. It is the **body of the dead** awaiting the embalmers, and is the first of a series of five pictures showing the ritual embalming process in symbols. This first one shows a nude figure lying upon a couch or bier. In order, probably, to indicate that it is a dead man, the limbs are shown in contorted positions. It lies on the right side, the right arm being under it, the left leg and arm **raised**, the elbow being shown flexed, with the forearm and hand extending downward toward the face. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 17, page 321)

By 1936 “Dr. Webb” had completely reversed his original position. In his book, *Joseph Smith as a Translator*, page 133, “Dr. Webb” even included a drawing of a man with his limbs elevated in the same manner as in Facsimile No. 1. Following is a photograph of this drawing as it appears in his book.



The deceased on his bier, previous to embalming, with Nebhat and Isis at head and foot, lamenting. The reclining figure is drawn to give the familiar ideogram of “speaking,” or “refraining from speech.”

“Dr. Webb” made these statements concerning this Egyptian scene:

. . . it was a custom . . . to draw a figure in the act of doing whatever was in accord with the story represented, and not to depend wholly upon descriptive captions or an accompanying text.

A directly relevant example of this custom is to be found in an accompanying plate, showing a man **newly dead**, as it seems, upon his couch, with Isis and Nebhat bewailing him at the foot and head, respectively. What these goddesses are doing is definitely indicated, because both are posed to comport with the familiar ideogram for “mourning” or “wailing.” . . . Even without this certain indication, we might gather that the figure on the couch represents a **dead man**, supposing, for example, from the apparently painful elevation of his limbs that he had died in “convulsions.” This may be consistent so far as it goes, but it is only a part of the story here told “after the manner of hieroglyphics.” . . . Because, evidently, the sister-wives of Osiris are mourning, we know that he **is dead**. Then, his pose indicates, “hieroglyphically” again, the “silence of death.” In another particular this scene corresponds with our “Facsimile.” This is in the fact that the figure seeming to lie upon the couch is also raised above it, as if “floating in the air.” Thus, as it stands, we find two features entirely consistent with, not to say also typical of Egyptian practices, and constituting strong evidence against any allegations of modern changes. (*Joseph Smith as a Translator*, Salt Lake City, 1936, pages 133-134)

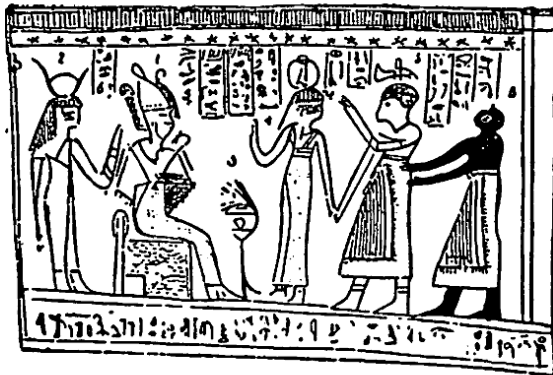
The reader will notice that several of the scenes we have reproduced show Osiris in a position similar to that of Facsimile No. 1. It would appear, then, that there is nothing in Facsimile No. 1 that would not fit an Egyptian funerary scene. The four canopic jars—used to hold the soft parts of the body that were removed during the embalming process—provide additional evidence that it is a funerary scene. And since the writing on the original papyrus speaks of burial and pagan gods, there can be no doubt that this is nothing but an illustration for a pagan funerary text. Klaus Baer has demonstrated that it is actually an illustration for a copy of the “Book of Breathings” written for a man by the name of Hor.

## 4. FACSIMILE No. 3

Joseph Smith claimed that Facsimile No. 3 showed “Abraham sitting upon Pharaoh’s throne.” Below is a photograph of Facsimile No. 3 as it is printed in the *Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, page 42. This is followed by Joseph Smith’s interpretation of the drawing.

### A FACSIMILE FROM THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM

No. 3.



#### EXPLANATION OF THE ABOVE CUT

1. Abraham sitting upon Pharaoh’s throne, by the politeness of the king, with a crown upon his head, representing the Priesthood, as emblematical of the grand Presidency in Heaven; with the scepter of justice and judgment in his hand.
  2. King Pharaoh, whose name is given in the characters above his head.
  3. Signifies Abraham in Egypt—referring to Abraham, as given in the ninth number of the *Times and Seasons*. (Also as given in the first facsimile of this book.)
  4. Prince of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, as written above the hand.
  5. Shulem, one of the king’s principal waiters, as represented by the characters above his hand.
  6. Olimlah, a slave belonging to the prince.
- Abraham is reasoning upon the principles of Astronomy, in the king’s court.

### Slapdash & Slipshod

As we examine the cut which appears in modern printings of the *Pearl of Great Price*, we are amazed at the extremely poor quality of the reproduction. We have previously quoted Dr. Hugh Nibley as stating that “careless changes occurred in later editions” of the *Pearl of Great Price*. He also stated that the facsimiles have suffered “drastic alterations” at the “hands of their various copyists.” He admits that “The Facsimiles now in use are extremely bad reproductions, far inferior to the first engravings published in 1842.” In the *Brigham Young University Studies*, Autumn 1968, page 73, he makes this statement:

But the Mormons have never displayed any particular reverence or awe for the facsimiles. Whereas the editing of the standard works has ever been an object of meticulous care, even a cursory examination of successive reproductions of the plates of the Book of Abraham shows the work to be amazingly **slapdash and slipshod**, as if a mere **approximation** of the general idea were quite enough to satisfy the brethren.

This statement must come as quite a surprise to the Mormon leaders. The man whom they chose to defend the Book of Abraham is now talking like those who are critical of the Church. In fact, many anti-Mormon writers would probably not use the terms “slapdash and slipshod” for fear they would offend the Mormon people.



However this may be, we must agree with Dr. Nibley that “drastic alterations” have been made in the facsimiles. Below the reader will find a comparison of the first printing of Facsimile No. 3 from the *Times and Seasons* with the way it appears in the *Pearl of Great Price* today.



1842 —Times and Seasons



Current — Pearl of Great Price

The reader will notice that the line of hieroglyphs which appears at the bottom of the facsimile is almost completely unreadable in modern editions of the *Pearl of Great Price*. Many of the hieroglyphs which appear at the top of the facsimile have also been altered.

Chad J. Flake, of the Brigham Young University Library, has been very critical of the quality of our reproductions. In fact, he has stated: “Undoubtedly the poorest reprints on Mormon subjects are those printed by the Modern Microfilm Company. Although these seem to be as expensive as any mentioned above, the quality of the printing bears no comparison.”

It is true that our printing does not match that produced by the Mormon-owned Deseret Book Co., and we do not claim to have the equipment or experience to produce a publication like *The Improvement Era*. Nevertheless, our photomechanical reprints are accurate. Those who bought our reprint of the *Times and Seasons* will see that the Book of Abraham Facsimiles are clear and readable.

Now, if we are able to produce accurate copies of the facsimiles, why is it that the Mormon Church, which has millions of dollars, is unable to produce the facsimiles without making “drastic alterations”? It would appear

that the Mormon leaders do not want accurate reprints of the facsimiles. We feel that the alterations in the facsimiles were a deliberate attempt to obscure the writing so that Egyptologists would be unable to read it.

## Meaning of Facsimile

The Mormon Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson has made this comment concerning Facsimile No. 3:

As a matter of fact I have seen variations of this picture many hundreds of times engraved and painted upon temple and tomb walls in Egypt and many more times in ancient papyri which have been preserved in museums. No two such drawings are exactly alike, but the distinguishing characteristics are so distinctive that if I were to see such a stone carving or drawing in a museum without a descriptive label attached to it I would immediately recognize it. It is a common illustration from an ancient funeral text known as the Per em Heru or more popularly, as the *Book of the Dead*. . . . I conclude that Facsimile No. 3 is a Judgement Scene in which the newly deceased spirit is being introduced into the presence of Osiris, Lord of the Dead, typical of Chapter (spell) 125 of the *Book of the Dead*. But this is not an unlabeled museum specimen. Indeed, the labels are reasonably lengthy. I am, per consequence, torn between two philosophic extremes. . . . what I have been urged to believe as an Elder of my church and what I have been urged to believe as an Egyptologist. There is no reconciling the two!

If Joseph Smith, Jr. correctly interpreted the *Pearl of Great Price* illustrations we must conclude that the science of Egyptology is based upon fallacies and Egyptian philology is erroneous. I take exception to Joseph Smith’s interpretation of this Facsimile. It does not conform with the mass of archaeological evidence nor with the laboriously established principles of Egyptology. (*A Translation and Study of Facsimile No. 3 in the Book of Abraham*, Salt Lake City, 1969, page 5)

On pages 24-26 of the same pamphlet, Dee Jay Nelson states:

Let us now consider the two vertical lines . . . which are referred to in Joseph Smith’s explanation as designating by name or rank “Shulem, one of the king’s principal waiters, as represented by the characters above his hand.” Most of these hieroglyphic characters are recognizable and the two columns produce one continuous message. . . . The translation is “Osiris Hor, who is true of word (justified), through all eternity.” This typical formalized name of the deceased identifies personage No. 5 as the beneficiary of the papyrus and further identifies the illustration as having originally been on the papyrus roll from which Facsimile No. 1 was copied (the name Hor is also written on the original of this “Metropolitan Fragment”) and that the two unillustrated Senses (Book of Breathing) Fragments were a part of the same roll (Hor is named on them as well). There is no possible way to reconcile Joseph Smith’s “explanation” with this translation. . . .

Having successfully identified most of the characters in the ten vertical columns across the top of Facsimile No. 3 and having made a translation of them we find that several facts emerge.

1. The names and titles of all five personages on the drawing are written.

2. Three of the proper names are identifiable. These are Osiris, Maāt and Anubis, pagan deities. My identification of the other two names (Hor and Isis) are probably correct.

3. The proper names of the Egyptian gods are written in those places upon the Facsimile where Joseph Smith claims that the names of mortals occur.

4. The last three facts lead to the conclusion that Joseph Smith's explanation attached to Facsimile No. 3 is almost totally incorrect. (*A Translation and Study of Facsimile No. 3 in the Book of Abraham*, pages 24-26)

On page 3 of the same pamphlet, Mr. Nelson states: "This is the Judgement Scene as it appears in the 125th Chapter of the Per em Heru, a funeral text often called the Book of the Dead and in some copies of the Book of Breathings. . . . The name of Osiris, Maāt, Anubis and Hor (written 3 times) appear in the hieroglyphic writing." The drawing below appears on page 13 of Mr. Nelson's

pamphlet. It compares the explanation of Facsimile No. 3 given by Joseph Smith with that of Egyptologists.

Klaus Baer, of the University of Chicago, gives this interpretation of Facsimile No. 3:

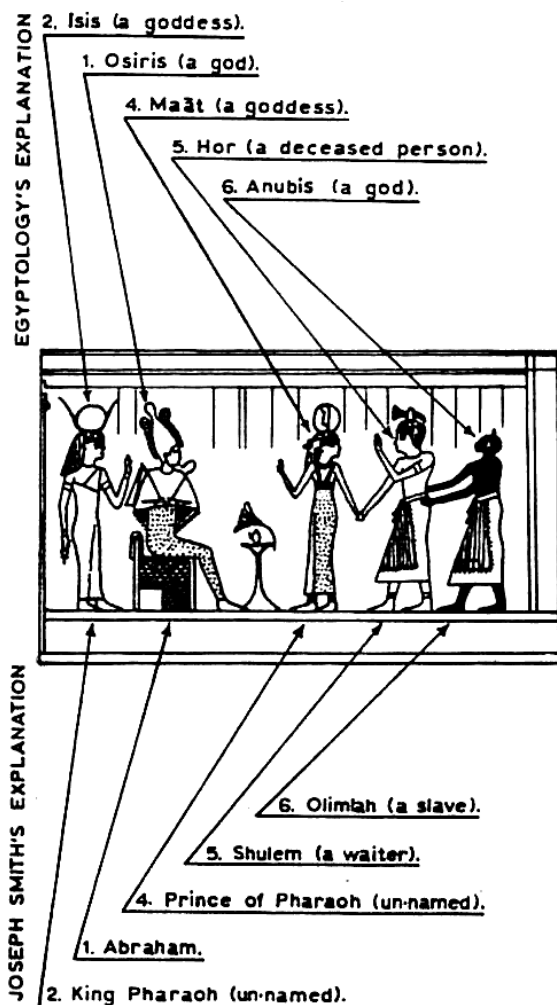
"Facsimile No. 3" shows a man (5), his hand raised in adoration and a cone of perfumed grease and a lotus flower on his head (ancient Egyptian festival attire), being introduced by Maāt (4), the goddess of justice, and Anubis (6), the guide of the dead, into the presence of Osiris (1), enthroned as king of the Netherworld. Behind Osiris stands Isis (2), and in front of him is an offering-stand (3) with a jug and some flowers on it. Over the whole scene is a canopy with stars painted on it to represent the sky.

The scene comes from a mortuary papyrus . . . It is a summary in one illustration of what the *Breathing Permit* promised: The deceased, after successfully undergoing judgment is welcomed into the presence of Osiris. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pages 126-127)

## Dressed Like Women

Dee Jay Nelson gives this interesting information concerning Facsimile No. 3:

After studying this cut I am compelled to wonder why Joseph Smith failed to include in his explanation a brief discussion of several of its most fascinating elements. I should think that it would be of prime interest to any viewer to know why Pharaoh and the Prince are masquerading in the hair dresses and clothing of women! Though somewhat less intriguing one also wonders why he did not comment on the odd fact that these same royal personages are both wearing the traditional head emblems of Egyptian gods. I should think that these comedy costumes would somewhat impair the sobriety of a court discussion upon the science of astronomy. (*A Translation and Study of Facsimile No. 3 in the Book of Abraham*, page 5)



Dee Jay Nelson makes these comments concerning the personage designated by Joseph Smith as “2. King Pharaoh, whose name is given in the characters above his head”:

This personage is wearing a full length, close fitting garment which was not typical of ancient dress worn by men. It was rather a style worn by women. The long hair supports this theory. Men usually wore the hair comparatively short. . . . never have I encountered an Egyptian representation of a male garment style with a high bare shouldered cut. Women usually wore a wrap-around sarong made of linen. It fell to the ankles and came up under the arms and sometimes over one shoulder. It was usually uniform in color, usually white, and in cut not unlike the moving picture version of the South Sea sarong. It would appear that this person is wearing such a costume. Another popular female garment was a wrap-around dress or sheath extending from the ankles to just below the breasts and held up by one or two attached suspenders. The breasts were left exposed, this not being considered immodest in those days. On the head of this person is a device which is indisputably the sun orb held within the space between two cow horns. This was the headdress of the goddesses Hathor and Isis who were usually shown wearing the long slim dresses and shoulder length hair. . . . It would appear that the goddess Isis is standing behind her husband, Osiris, . . .

I have never seen an ancient picture of Pharaoh wearing the solar disk and horns. It would be completely out of character. The position of the person labeled No. 2, behind the throne, the female costume, the long hair and the disk and horns head emblem provide absolutely indisputable evidence that this figure is a goddess, probably Isis. It can not, by any stretch of the imagination, be a man and certainly it is not Pharaoh. (*A Translation and Study of Facsimile No. 3 in the Book of Abraham*, pages 12-14)

Dee Jay Nelson makes this comment concerning the other goddess which Joseph Smith identified as a man:

No. 4: The cut explanation indicates that this personage is “Prince of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, as written above the hand.” I have already indicated my reasons for believing that this is a female figure and thus not possibly a “Prince of Pharaoh.” The costume worn is, to all appearances, the high, slim, ankle length garment with suspenders worn by women. Again, the hair appears to be long. . . . I note an emblem upon the head of this individual. A disk or orb was certainly the artist’s intention and inclosed within the disk is some

other device. It would appear to me to be a traditional ostrich feather. A feather emblem upon the head of an individual, with or without the orb, would identify the personage wearing it as Maāt, Goddess of Truth. (*A Translation and Study of Facsimile No. 3 in the Book of Abraham*, page 14)

The arrows below point to the two goddesses whom Joseph Smith mistakenly identified as men.



Dr. Hugh Nibley admits that the personages Joseph Smith identified as men seem to look more like women. He states:

If “Pharaoh” and “the Prince of Pharaoh” in Facsimile 3 were being drawn to order, why on earth were they not drawn as princes or **at least as men** instead of being so **very obviously women**—is this cunning alteration to suit Joseph Smith’s interpretation? (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, page 76)

### Jackal’s Head

Dee Jay Nelson makes this comment concerning the personage designated by Joseph Smith as “6. Olimlah, a slave belonging to the prince”:

Note on Facsimile No. 3 in the Book of Abraham that the head of the black figure, described in the cut explanation under item No. 6, has a less than human shape. It only remotely indicates any features.

This black figure is undoubtedly Anubis. Note the protruding ear on the Book of Abraham copies of the cut. (*A Translation and Study of Facsimile No. 3 in the Book of Abraham*, page 15)

Dee Jay Nelson has noticed that the appendage on the top of the head is “somewhat longer in the 1842 version than in later printed editions.” Below is a comparison of the two heads and a drawing of the head of Anubis as it appears on page 15 of Nelson’s pamphlet.



## A Common Scene

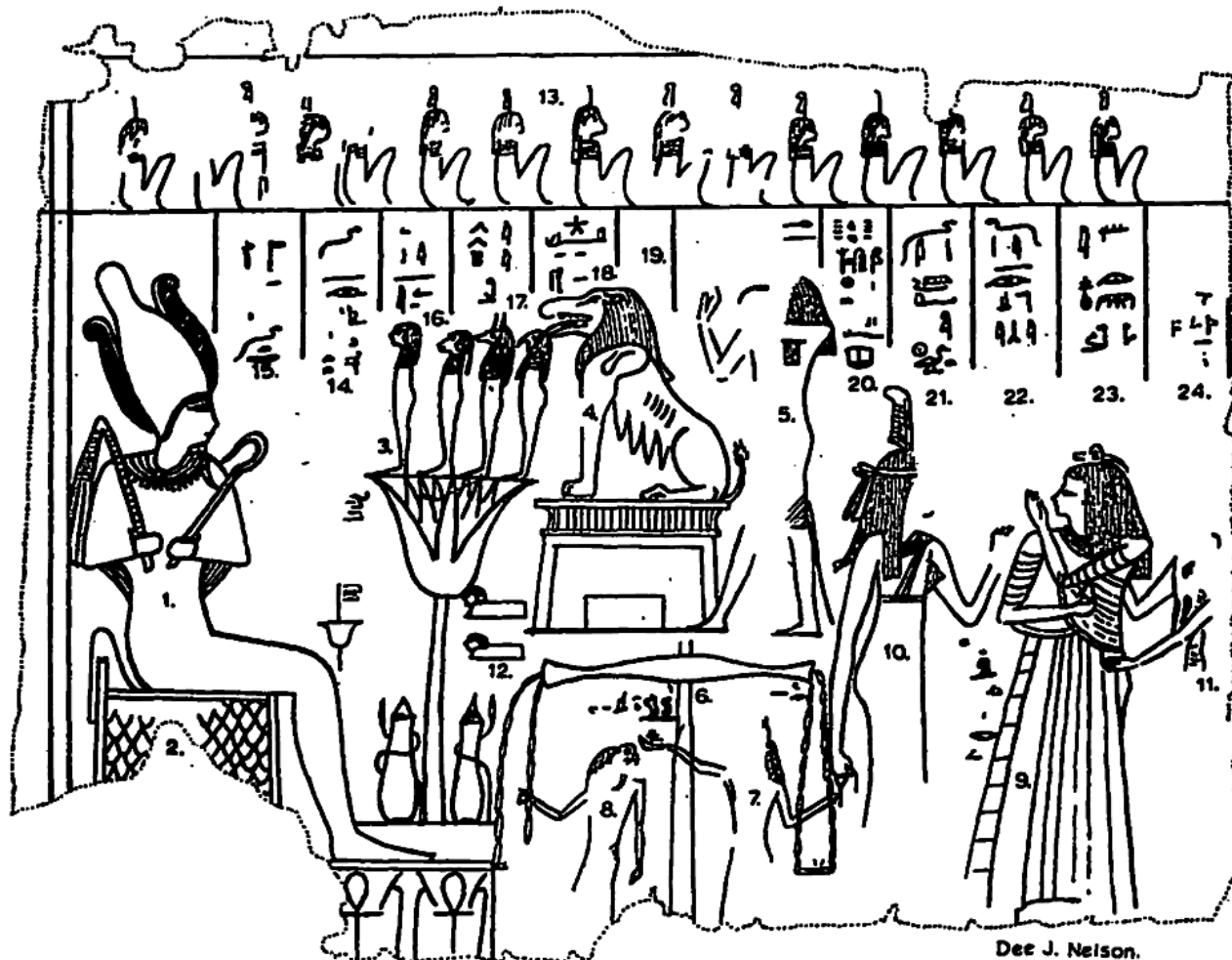
Although “Dr. Webb” claimed that Facsimile No. 3 was unique in some respects, he did admit there was a resemblance between this scene and those found in the *Book of the Dead*. In fact, he even mentioned the *Book of Breathings*:

We must admit the close resemblance of the seated figure to the traditional representations of Osiris, wearing the double plumed crown, and holding the flail, or scourge, and the hook, or crook, in either hand. The figures before and behind him also closely suggest the goddesses mentioned by our critics. . . . the scene differs in several

important details from common run of representations of Osiris judging the dead. . . . there are variations in some other books of the same import, particularly in later ages. Among such latter may be mentioned the papyrus, or [of?] Kerasher, or Kersher—containing the so-called “Book of Breathings.” This papyrus, . . . shows the deceased Kerasher, . . . led before Osiris by the jackal-headed Anubis, and followed by a figure described as “Maât,” . . . This variation of the judgment scene may be typical of some modification of ideas on the matter, and, according to accounts, has several close analogues in other papyri. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, pages 450-451)


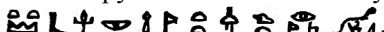
In his book, *Joseph Smith as a Translator*, R. C. Webb has included some scenes which are similar to the scene shown in Facsimile No. 3 (see pages 69, 151, and 156 of his book).

Among Joseph Smith’s collection of papyri which was given to the Church by the Metropolitan Museum we find a judgment scene similar to Facsimile No. 3. Below is Dee Jay Nelson’s reconstruction drawing of this scene. The reader will find a photograph of it in *The Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 2, page 116. The drawing brings out some features that are not very clear in the photograph.

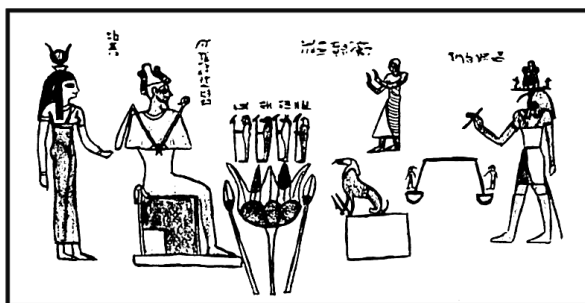


The Mormon leaders seem willing to admit that this scene has nothing to do with Abraham, for it is labelled “Court of Osiris” in the *Improvement Era*, February 1968, pages 40-B and 40-C. The reader will note the similarity to Facsimile No. 3. Osiris on his throne is almost identical to “1. Abraham sitting upon Pharaoh’s throne” in Facsimile No. 3. In both cases we see Maāt, the goddess of truth, with the feather of truth upon her head. Dee Jay Nelson has also noticed that in both cases the deceased is “being supported from behind by some heavenly personage” (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, page 34).

Grant Heward has located two copies of the *Book of Breathings* which have judgment scenes that resemble Facsimile No. 3. They are located in the Berlin Museum and are identified as Papyrus No. 3135 and Papyrus No. 3154. Below are drawings from these papyri compared with Facsimile No. 3.

The reader will notice that in both papyri Isis wears the “sun orb” between “two cow horns” and stands behind Osiris exactly as in Facsimile No. 3. The name Isis is clearly written on both papyri. In fact, Papyrus No. 3135 reads, , “The great Isis, Mother of the Gods.” This is the same reading that Dee Jay Nelson suggested for the column of hieroglyphs above Isis in Fac. No. 3 (see page 19 of his pamphlet on Facsimile No. 3). The hieroglyphs above Osiris on Papyrus No. 3135 are very clear. They seem to be: . This would translate, “Sayeth Osiris, Chief of Amentet, the great God, Lord of the East.” The first few words of this reading are identical to Dee Jay Nelson’s translation of the hieroglyphs by Osiris in Fac. No. 3: “Sayeth Osiris, Chief of Amentet” (*A Translation and Study of Facsimile No. 3*, page 24).

Papyrus No. 3135



Facsimile No. 3



Papyrus No. 3154

## 5. JOSEPH'S EGYPTIAN ALPHABET

For 130 years the Mormon Church suppressed a document which absolutely proves that Joseph Smith did not understand the Egyptian language. This document is known as the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar." In the month of July, 1835, Joseph Smith recorded the following in the *History of the Church*:

The remainder of this month, I was continually engaged in translating an alphabet to the Book of Abraham and arranging a grammar of the Egyptian language, as practiced by the ancients. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 238)

After Joseph Smith's death the "Egyptian Alphabet" was brought to Utah. Little was known about it however until the year 1935. James R. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, stated:

Your author was from 1932 to 1936 a student of Dr. Sperry's at Brigham Young University and was in "on the ground floor" of this research with Dr. Sperry. This included our "discovery," with the assistance of A. William Lund, assistant Church Historian, in February, 1935 of Joseph Smith's translation of Abraham's Alphabet and Grammar to accompany his (Abraham's) record which we discussed in Chapter 8. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, by James R. Clark, page 156)

Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of the Brigham Young University, made this statement concerning the "Egyptian Alphabet":

I went up to the Church Historian's office and lo and behold we found this old Egyptian grammar in the archives of the Church. . . . I am amazed even to this day how we managed to persuade the Church authorities to let us bring that Egyptian grammar down here to the B. Y. U. to have Dr. Hales photograph it for us. Here is the book. You will notice it says, "Egyptian Alphabet." (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, page 7 of 1964 ed. )

Three years after the "discovery" of the "Egyptian Alphabet" Dr. Sidney B. Sperry had occasion to speak of it, but he did not tell that it was still in existence:

For many years the writer has been intrigued by the statement of the Prophet that he was "translating an alphabet to the Book of Abraham." Just what is meant by this phrase? A little by way of explanation—evidence leads us to the conclusion that the Prophet found it anything but easy to translate the Abrahamic records. . . . The Seer would of course receive the interpretation of all new and unknown signs or hieroglyphics, but after their meaning had been given to him it is not likely that the Lord would repeat the process when the same characters appeared again. Possibly for that reason the Prophet decided to make a sign list in which would be recorded the meanings of each new symbol as it appeared upon the papyrus of Abraham. Once recorded it could be consulted as often as the Prophet needed to refresh his mind. It seems therefore quite probable that the alphabet was arranged very much as follows. On the extreme left of the page the signs in question would be written down in a vertical column. To the right of this column would appear the sounds of the Egyptian sign or hieroglyphic in English letters together with an interpretation of the character in question. We can readily imagine that some grammatical phenomena of the language would be revealed in the notes which the Prophet wrote down. It would seem rational to suppose that after the Prophet had written down many pages of these signs with their meanings he would become more and more competent to read them as they appeared on the papyri. (*Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, by Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, Salt Lake City, 1938, pages 68-69)

James R. Clark stated that Dr. Sperry had already examined the "Egyptian Alphabet" when he made the statements quoted above:

His "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" survived his death and the Mormon exodus to the West. An entry in the L.D.S. Church Historian's Office Journal under the date of October 17, 1855, states that the "Egyptian Alphabet" was among the early records of the L.D.S. Church when they were moved on that day into the fireproof vault of the new Historian's Office in Salt Lake City.

Nothing more appears in L.D.S. literature so far as we are aware concerning Joseph Smith's "Egyptian Alphabet" until 1938 when Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, in an

M.I.A. course of study, **hinted of its existence**, after having **personally examined it** in the Historian's Office along with the present investigator.

After having had a photographic copy of this document for a number of years, the present investigator secured permission from the L.D.S. Church Historian to describe the document in brief and to publish photographs of the outside covers and label and of page one and to quote from other pages. (*Progress in Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, 1963, page 27)

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe probably knew that the "Egyptian Grammar" was in existence prior to the "discovery," for Dr. Sperry stated:

In July, 1835, the Prophet had written, "The remainder of this month I was continually engaged in translating the alphabet to the Book of Abraham, and arranging a grammar of the Egyptian language as practiced by the ancients" . . .

Since I had been studying ancient Semitics, particularly Bible languages, I was very much intrigued by this statement and wondered why the church authorities during the Spalding incident hadn't brought out the grammar which the Prophet said he was making. I quite naturally concluded that the Church didn't have it. So I set out to do two main things: (1) find evidence of the papyri which we knew were once in the hands of Joseph Smith and (2) find the Prophet's "alphabet and grammar of the Egyptian language as practiced by the ancients" . . .

After this, I tried once more to find the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar but finally had to give it up. I thought perhaps the boat containing the church records had overturned in the Missouri River and that they had thus been lost.

But I was mistaken in this, for some years later I was taking Dr. John A. Widtsoe from a conference in Provo to his Salt Lake City home. As we arrived outside the town of Lehi, it suddenly dawned on me that the grammar and alphabet was in the LDS Church Historian's Office. Lo and behold, when we made a search in that place, there it was! (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A.*, at Brigham Young University, March 1, 1968, no. 105, page 3)

Dr. Ross T. Christensen, of the BYU, relates the following:

. . . I remember when I was first a student here at Brigham Young University in 1938. You and Dr. Sperry had just become aware of the existence in Salt Lake City of this *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. I remember that the air was tense with excitement on this subject, or at least I sensed it. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A.*, no. 105, page 4)

Dr. Sperry anticipated that the "Egyptian Alphabet" would help the Mormon Church to "answer more specifically the accusations that had been made by the Egyptologists who had made their pronouncements upon the material supplied by the Reverend Mr. Spalding of Salt Lake City."

Instead of helping Mormons answer the "accusations" made by Egyptologists, the "Egyptian Alphabet" has turned out to be a source of embarrassment. Dr. Clark stated that he is not in favor of submitting it to scholars:

Many people have asked me, "Well, why don't they submit the grammar and alphabet to scholars?" Well, my answer is this, that the Prophet didn't complete it. They have already disagreed with him, most of the scholars, on his translation. I'm wondering if there would be any change in their approach to it now to what it has been, and so I'm not personally in favor of submitting it. . . . I'm not in favor of re-opening the question. I'm in favor of doing what we've done with the Book of Mormon. Let the thing keep rolling and depend on our testimonies of the gospel. (*Prophets and Problems of the Pearl of Great Price*, BYU, page 75)

Although the Mormon Church Historian's Office has the original document and also a microfilm copy, members of the Mormon Church have been required to get special permission from Joseph Fielding Smith, LDS Church Historian, to even see the microfilm. In one instance they even denied that they had such a document. (See statement by Grant Heward in our *Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 2, pages 177-178.)

On December 10, 1960, Dr. Sidney B. Sperry was asked if the "Egyptian Alphabet" could be published:

Question: Why not publish the Egyptian grammar?

Answer: Well, I do not know whether the Church authorities would let us do it now or not. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, BYU, page 9 of 1964 ed.)

Although the Mormon leaders did their best to prevent it, we obtained a microfilm copy of this document, and in 1986 we made a photo-reprint of it.

Richard P. Howard, who is Church Historian of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, made this comment:

Until recently this document was available to only a few scholars at the Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah. However, Jerald Tanner of Salt Lake City managed to obtain a microfilm of this document and published enlarged prints from this film. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, page 91)

The Mormon writer Jay M. Todd makes this statement concerning the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar":

The Prophet's apparent English translation or meaning of the symbols in the "grammar" has yet not been made public information by the Church. There is no particular reason known to this author suggesting why it not be made public, nor is there any reason suggesting that it ought to be made public, other than the intense interest on the subject. There are, however, several copies of the "grammar" available, copies apparently clandestinely

acquired from the Church Historian's Office, and they are sold by some merchants. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, by Jay M. Todd, Salt Lake City, 1969, pages 313-314)

Joseph Smith's "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" has been submitted to some of the world's top Egyptologists and they have declared that it is fraudulent. A film of this document was sent to the British Museum. In a letter dated December 22, 1965, I. E. S. Edwards, Keeper of the Dept. of Egyptian Antiquities, British Museum, made this statement concerning the "Egyptian Alphabet":

I am writing rather belatedly to acknowledge the receipt of the film of the Mormon documents which you sent me recently.

I have looked at all the documents and I can only say that they reinforce, in my view, the opinion which I expressed in my letter to you of 11th November. The commentary, such as it is, shows that **the writer could not possibly have understood ancient Egyptian. They simply do not deserve serious study.**

Sometime later a gift copy of the printed document was sent to him. In a letter dated June 9, 1966, he acknowledged receipt of the document and again denounced Joseph Smith's work as fraudulent:

It was very kind of you to send me a copy of Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar . . .

Perhaps it is needless to say that the book is largely a piece of **imagination** and **lacking in any kind of scientific value**. . . . The whole document reminds me of the writings of psychic practitioners which are sometimes sent to me.

In 1966 Dr. Labib Habachi visited Salt Lake City. The Mormon leaders entertained him and even published an article about him. The title of this article read: "Egyptian Expert Sees Famed Vault in Canyon."

Grant Heward wrote to Dr. Habachi and sent him the facsimiles from the Book of Abraham and Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. Dr. Habachi examined the documents, and, in a letter dated January 15, 1967, he stated:

I have been very late in answering your letters, but believe me, I have been hesitating to write the answer at all. The reason is that when I have been in Salt Lake City and saw the wonderful organisations of the Mormons, I could only admire them and their way of life. I have been in the welfare center for helping the poor, in the Music Hall, in the headquarters of the top people, where I met many distinguished personalities, and in the caves where the records are kept.

Now you are sending me a film, an Egyptian Grammar, some quotations about Egyptians and coloured people. These, I have to say, are **simple imaginations** and no **scholar** at all can ever approve anything in these documents of the Mormons. A long time ago, the

Mormons were able to purchase some chapters of the Book of the Dead found everywhere in many tombs of the New Kingdom. These were interpreted in a rather **funny** way, **not based on any scientific foundations**. This is perhaps the reason why they attacked Egyptologists who would never understand Joseph Smith's translations. Of course, they cannot understand with their background any of such translations!

I would not like to shake your faith. There is no question that the Mormons have planned a wonderful organisation, but I have to tell you, as an Egyptologist, that their claim to understand hieroglyphics is **mere imagination**. So forget about that claim and go on with a true Christian spirit in the life you are leading. (Letter from Dr. Labib Habachi to Grant Heward, dated January 15, 1967)

Richard A. Parker, Department of Egyptology, Brown University, has also expressed an opinion concerning Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar:

5. I have seen Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. The interpretation of signs purported to be Egyptian have **no resemblance** to the **meanings** ascribed to them by Egyptologists. (Letter from Richard A. Parker to Marvin Cowan, dated January 9, 1968)

Thus we see that the "Egyptian Alphabet" proves that Joseph Smith did not understand Egyptian and that the Book of Abraham is a work of his own imagination. We feel that a person does not have to be an Egyptologist to see that Joseph Smith's "Egyptian Alphabet" is not authentic. For instance, a person has only to compare the Egyptian system of counting as found in the *Encyclopedia Britannica Junior*, 1953 ed., page 350, with Joseph Smith's purported system of counting found on page "G" of the "Egyptian Alphabet." The real system of Egyptian counting does not resemble the system we use in America today, but Joseph Smith's purported system looks almost like our own.

You will notice that in Joseph Smith's system the numbers 1, 4, 5, 7 and 8 are almost identical to our numbers. The number 9 looks like our 9 written backwards. The number 10 looks like our 10 except that it is written backwards with a small cross through the 1. On the next page is a photograph of part of Joseph Smith's purported system of Egyptian counting.

Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of the Brigham Young University, admits that Joseph Smith's system is not the conventional system of Egyptian counting:

Now, I might point out that this Egyptian counting shows that we are **not** dealing with Egyptian in the conventional sense. For example, here, counting from one up to ten. (Dr. Sperry counts, reading from the book the Egyptian words.) Now that counting, so far as I am aware, **is not used in conventional Egyptian**. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, Brigham Young University, 1964 ed., page 8)



Egyptian Alphabet		English Explanation	
1	Sh	one	
2	Si	two	
3	Se	three	
4	Jeh	four	
5	Yeh	five	
6	Wai	six	
7	Waa	seven	
8	a	eight	
9	na	nine	
10	Jah	ten	
101	Sh-Jah	1011 eleven	
102	Si-Jah	1012 twelve	
103	Se-Jah	1013 thirteen	
104	Jeh-Jah	1014 fourteen	
105	Yeh-Jah	1015 fifteen	
106	Wai-Jah	1016 sixteen	
107	Waa-Jah	1017 seventeen	
108	a-Jah	1018 eighteen	
109	na-Jah	1019 nineteen	
110	Jah-Ji	211 twenty	
1011	Sh-Jah-Si	twice ten and one one	21
1012	Si-Jah-Si	twice ten and two	22
1013	Se-Jah-Si	twice ten and three	23
1014	Jeh-Jah-Si	twice ten and four	24
1015	Yeh-Jah-Si	twice ten and five	25
1016	Wai-Jah-Si	twice ten and six	26
1017	Waa-Jah-Si	twice ten and seven	27
1018	a-Jah-Si	twice ten and eight	28

A photograph of page G of the "Egyptian Alphabet."

Although the Mormon leaders would not allow the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" to be published in its entirety, Mormon scholars have referred to it as the very key to the Book of Abraham. After the Church obtained the papyri from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the *Deseret News*, LDS Church Section, carried an article in which they mentioned Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar:

Hyrum L. Andrus in his recently-published work, *Doctrinal Commentary on The Pearl of Great Price*, notes that a study of a handwritten document by Joseph Smith designated as the *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*, shows each page divided by three columns.

These columns have a copy of a character in the first column, the English pronunciation in the second, and the translation in the third.

A study of the document suggests that it was formulated by an ancient writer, probably Abraham, to assist a translator in deciphering the language in which the record was written. If this conclusion is correct,

Joseph Smith literally translated an alphabet to the Book of Abraham, Dr. Andrus wrote. (*Deseret News*, LDS Church Section, December 2, 1967, page 10)

The *Improvement Era* printed this statement about the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar":

Some present-day scholars think that part of the papyri that Joseph had in his possession contained an actual primer in the Egyptian alphabet and grammar previously prepared by its ancient authors for the benefit of future translators. (*Improvement Era*, January 1988, page 16)

Dr. Sidney B. Sherry of the Brigham Young University; tells that he read Joseph Smith's statement in the *History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 238, and decided that Joseph Smith probably used the Urim and Thummim to prepare the "Egyptian Grammar":

Let me read that to you again: "I was continually engaged in translating an alphabet." Now what did the Prophet mean by that, "translating an alphabet"?

I pondered over this a great deal and finally came to the conclusion that what the Prophet meant by “translating an alphabet” was that as he copied the characters from the papyri which were in his possession, he would put down these characters, one after another, with the general meaning that he would get as he looked at them **through the Urim and Thummim**. I assume that he used the Urim and Thummim, in translating these materials, but I felt that the Lord never would condone laziness in a man or in a scholar, and that as the Prophet would go through these passages in Egyptian, he put down the meaning opposite the character. In so doing, then, it would be necessary for him to call on the Lord, continually, to tell the meaning of a character. Well, that is the way I figured it out. (*The Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, page 4 of 1964 edition)

Dr. Clark made this statement in 1955:

By a more careful scrutiny of this Alphabet and Grammar than Dr. Sperry was able to give it at the time of his writing (1938) we have discovered some evidence which seems to indicate that it was Abraham not Joseph Smith who compiled the sign list to accompany his record and that Joseph Smith did literally translate this Alphabet to the Book of Abraham. . . . Evidently Abraham anticipated the difficulties that both ancient and modern readers would have in deciphering his script and provided a key to his language. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, by James R. Clark, Salt Lake City, 1955, pages 109-110)

On December 10, 1960, Dr. Clark stated:

All of the characters that are in the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar that Dr. Sperry mentioned have now been taken off onto cards. [Exhibited to the audience.] The characters on the cards are copied freehand, from a photostatic copy of the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. We copied each character onto a 5 x 8 card and then typed Joseph Smith’s translation of the character, with the result that we have about 350 characters, with their translations. A study is in process on an analysis of these characters. . . . This project of research is now going on. I use these cards, get them all sorted and spread out on a big table and then I take the facsimiles from the *Pearl of Great Price*, as printed in the *Times and Seasons*, because they are the only accurate ones—there have been printer’s errors in all the rest of them—and work from them. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, 1964 ed., pages 60 and 63)

William E. Berrett, Vice-Administrator of the Brigham Young University, made this statement concerning the “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar”:

Joseph Smith . . . did not expect the Lord to forever aid him in understanding ancient languages. He could learn many of these for himself and he set about to do so. He began a study of Egyptian, Hebrew and Greek. . . . This study continued at intervals until his death. His most **notable achievement** was the development at Kirtland of a **grammar for the Egyptian hieroglyphic form**

**of writing. This was used by him**, as well as divine aid, **in translating ancient writings of the Patriarch Abraham**, now published as the Book of Abraham in the *Pearl of Great Price*. **This grammar** was never published, and was perhaps never used by any one other than the Prophet. It was, however, **the first Egyptian Grammar in America**, and was developed entirely independent of Champollion’s Egyptian Grammar. (*The Restored Church*, by William E. Berrett, Salt Lake City, 1956 ed., pages 133-134)

At the time we published Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar in 1966 we made this statement in the *Salt Lake City Messenger*:

Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar suppressed for 130 years now comes to light. This document proves that Joseph Smith did not understand ancient Egyptian and that the Book of Abraham was a work of his imagination!

In 1968 we heard that Dr. Hugh Nibley (who is supposed to be the Church’s top authority on the Egyptian language) had repudiated Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. We could hardly believe that Dr. Nibley would repudiate the document which was supposed to have been the very key to the translation of the Book of Abraham. This rumor, however, was confirmed in the *Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter, 1968. In this article Dr. Nibley makes some astonishing admissions:

Which brings us to the subject of Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Grammar, because a surprising number of people have recently undertaken studies of that remarkable work. This writer, however, **has never spent so much as five minutes with the Egyptian Grammar, and does not intend to unless he is forced to it**. When parties in Salt Lake procured and reproduced photographs of this document, they advertized it with the usual sensationalism as a “Hidden Document Revealed. Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar suppressed for 130 Years Now Comes to Light. This document proves that Joseph Smith did not understand Egyptian and that the Book of Abraham was a work of his imagination!” Joseph Smith **never pretended to understand Egyptian**, nor that the Book of Abraham was a work of his scholarship: if this document as advertized proves anything it is that some people will go to any length of skulduggery to make a case out of nothing. For if the so-called Alphabet and Grammar were meant as an inspired communication it would have been published as such, not “hidden” or “suppressed for 130 years.” **It was hidden and suppressed** for the same reason that Brigham Young’s laundry lists are hidden and suppressed, because it was nobody else’s business. Let us allow Joseph Smith at least for the time being the luxury of a moment of privacy, of a little **speculation** on his own there on his hands and knees in the front room of the Mansion House, with papyri spread out around him on the floor. The fact that he kept his notes strictly to himself

is evidence enough that they were his own private concern and were never meant as a message to the Church.

This is a very important point. The whole attack against the Book of Abraham in the past has been based on the perfectly false principle that whatever a prophet does must be of a supernatural nature and whatever he says must have the authority of scripture, and that hence if a prophet ever betrays the slightest sign of human weakness or any mortal limitation he must necessarily be a false prophet. . . . The sectarian world has never been able to see how it is possible to have revelations and still learn by trial and error: . . . it should be perfectly clear to all that no one is bound by anything outside of the four standard works, and that to make an issue of the so-called Egyptian Grammar is to insist on a doctrine of infallibility that is diametrically opposed to the teachings of the Church. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, pages 176-178)

This statement by Dr. Nibley must come as a great shock to the Mormons. Notice that he admits that Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar "was hidden and suppressed." He also admits that Joseph Smith did not understand Egyptian and that the "Egyptian Grammar" is not worth "five minutes" study. It seems, then, that Dr. Nibley is willing to admit that the "Egyptian Grammar" is worthless, yet he still maintains that the Book of Abraham came by divine revelation. We feel that this is an impossible stand to maintain. If the "Egyptian Grammar" is worthless, then the Book of Abraham must also be rejected.

On February 8, 1968, Hugh Nibley wrote a letter in which he stated:

Joseph Smith **played around** with Egyptian documents, but by his own admission he was only **trying** to read them. We tell about this in the forthcoming *Era* for March. A lot of questions have to be answered in this business. . . . The wonderful thing about these papyri is that they raise so many interesting questions. You want the answers all at once, but that would spoil all the fun. (Letter dated February 8, 1968)

In a letter dated June 18, 1968, Dr. Nibley made these statements:

Joseph Smith speculated on various aspects of Egyptian writing and in the process left a number of documents which have been called "The Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar." The work was never completed or put into form for publication—it remained speculative and subject to change to the end. It is quite different from the Egyptian grammars we use today . . . Since Joseph Smith's "Egyptian Grammar" has never had any official status in the Church it has not been used in the way of evidence. In the coming months I hope to go into the subject of the Prophet's interpretations of Egyptian writings in some detail. There is ample evidence that Smith **did** know what he was talking about, but the **evidence is not at present to be found in the Grammar.**

In the *Improvement Era* for March, 1968, Dr. Nibley made these statements:

Joseph Smith's work, here mentioned, on the Egyptian alphabet was never accepted or even presented to the Church as revelation, and no one is bound by it, but the zeal and application of the brethren was rewarded by a revelation that far transcended any intellectual efforts of man. It is this revelation that is comprised in the *Pearl of Great Price*, and it is by it and others like it that one may judge the Prophet Joseph, and not by such **preliminary gropings** as the so-called Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar, which was never completed, never released for publication, and, so far as we have been able to discover, never even mentioned in public. Granted that diligent searching and study may be a preliminary to receiving revelation, the revelation when it comes is certainly not to be judged by them. We are not only permitted but also instructed to cast about for possible solutions in our mind before the real solution is given us, and if we find Joseph Smith doing just that, we should not rush to point out possible flaws in his preliminary speculations as proof that he was not inspired.

Where translation is concerned, Joseph Smith also operated on two levels, with no danger of confusing the two. . . . we must allow him the luxury of having his own ideas about things, and making his own **mistakes** and his own translations as long as he plays the game fairly and never presents them as binding on others. (*Improvement Era*, March 1968, page 18)

The Mormon writers Keith Terry and Walter Whipple seemed to realize that it is impossible to repudiate Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar without also repudiating the Book of Abraham. They accused Dr. Nibley of scoffing at Joseph Smith's translations:

The "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" is presently preserved in the Church Historian's office. It is written in a book approximately eight by twelve inches in size. . . .

The complexity of the alphabet of the ancient writers is explained with the following statements: "By inserting a straight mark over it . . . its signification is increased five times more." At this point his explanation becomes quite complex and loses all but the most astute grammarians in the lengthy commentary, . . .

This information presented in the "Alphabet and Grammar" concerning horizontal lines has **no correlation to Champollion's hieroglyphic decipherments.** Modern Egyptologists, including Mormon scholar **Hugh Nibley**, have **scoffed** at such methods of translating. (*From the Last of Decades*, pages 36-37)

Dr. Nibley must have received a great deal of criticism from members of the Church who felt that he had betrayed the Church by rejecting Joseph Smith's "Alphabet and Grammar," for in the August 1968 issue of the *Improvement Era*, Dr. Nibley reversed his position by stating that a student of the Book of Abraham should be thoroughly familiar with the "Alphabet and Grammar":

Consider for a moment the scope and complexity of the materials with which the student must cope if he would undertake a serious study of the Book of Abraham's authenticity. At the very least they must be **thoroughly familiar** with (1) the texts of the "Joseph Smith Papyri" identified as belonging to the Book of the Dead, (2) the content and nature of the mysterious "Sensen" fragment, (3) the so-called "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" attributed to Joseph Smith, . . . (*Improvement Era*, August 1968, pages 55-56)

This is certainly a strange statement to be coming from the man who had previously stated that he had "**never spent so much as five minutes** with the Egyptian Grammar, and **does not intend to** unless he is forced to it."

In the November 1968 issue of the *Improvement Era*, Dr. Nibley made these statements:

From the very beginning this writer has been **rightly** accused of an almost callous unconcern for the newly located papyri (all except the one matching Facsimile 1) as evidence for or against the authenticity of the Book of Abraham. Equal **indifference** to the so-called Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar springs neither from misgivings nor indolence, but from a principle which has been taught in the Church from the beginning and which cannot be too strictly enjoined on all students of the gospel, namely, that a Latter-day Saint is bound to accept as true scriptures only the standard works of the Church. (*Improvement Era*, November 1968, page 36)

In the Autumn 1968 issue of *Brigham Young University Studies*, Dr. Nibley speaks of the "free-wheeling conjectures" in Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar:

Whether the "Sensen" Papyrus or the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar (here-after cited as EAG) makes sense or not, the Book of Abraham makes very good sense, . . . There is every indication that the **free-wheeling conjectures** of the EAG were made after the Book of Abraham was completed, so that even the irrelevant argument of the book's dubious documentary background remains unfounded. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Autumn 1968, pages 71-72)

On page 95 of the same issue, Dr. Nibley admitted that he does not know "just what" the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar is:

The Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar cannot be used as a close check on the Book of Abraham until a great deal more is known about both documents. We **do not yet know just what** the EAG is, or in what light Joseph Smith regarded it.

Dr. Nibley's statements regarding Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar have left some Mormons in a state of confusion. The Mormon writer

Jay M. Todd admits that there is a division in the Church with regard to this matter:

In frank terms, no one seems to know the "grammar's" value. Dr. Hugh Nibley has suggested that the "grammar" represents the Prophet's personal "hobbying," personal ideas, and was never intended by the Prophet to represent revealed information. Other students, generally not familiar with Egyptian, however, have suggested that the "grammar" represents a major contribution in the cracking of an ancient language. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, Salt Lake City, 1969, page 314)

On pages 252-253 of the same book, Mr. Todd admits that the issue is confusing:

It is apparent that the Prophet projected confidence in his usage of Egyptian, as if he was quite familiar with the tongue. Perhaps he had done far more than merely read on [an?] English transcript appearing in the seer stone. Perhaps—and the age-old question appears again—perhaps we have no idea about how Joseph Smith and God effected the translations. Was it a simple reading of English for the Book of Mormon, but another type of translation for the Book of Abraham? What was this alphabet and grammar? Questions abound. All that is known at present is: Joseph Smith apparently felt quite confident about his Egyptian. . . . One wonders, after reading reports that the seer stone was the instrument for the reception of the Book of Abraham, if the Prophet was merely taking some of the information acquired from his experience in recording and viewing the translation and applying it to the papyri with the best ability and knowledge he had at the moment. If this were the case, such an alphabet and grammar would have the seeds of Joseph's personal notions as much as of inspired elements. Or, as is obvious, it could be the complete result of inspiration. It also could be the result of his own notions about cracking the Egyptian language. . . . The issue is a **confusing one** at present.

## Master of All Languages

We feel that Dr. Nibley has put the Mormon Church in an embarrassing position, for it is impossible to repudiate Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar without repudiating the Book of Abraham and casting a shadow of doubt upon the rest of Joseph Smith's works.

Dr. Nibley now claims that "Joseph Smith never pretended to understand Egyptian," and that the Book of Abraham came by revelation. In the Winter 1968 issue of *Brigham Young University Studies*, page 174. Dr. Nibley states:

And while Kircher quite wrongly claimed a perfect knowledge of many exotic languages, while the world stood by and applauded, Joseph Smith made no secret of his fallibility and claimed to know no language but English.

This statement is about as far from the truth as it is possible to get. Actually, Joseph Smith claimed to be a great linguist, Josiah Quincy related the following:

The prophet referred to his miraculous gift to **understanding all languages**, and took down a Bible in various tongues, for the purpose of exhibiting his accomplishments in this particular. Our position as guests prevented our testing his powers by a rigid examination, and the rendering of a few familiar texts seemed to be accepted by his followers as a triumphant demonstration of his abilities. It may have been an accident, but I observed that the bulk of his translations were from the Hebrew, which, presumably, his visitors did not understand, rather than from the classical languages, in which they might more easily have caught him tripping. (*Figures of the Past*, as quoted in *Among the Mormons*, page 136)

Josiah Quincy told Henry Halkett of his visit with Joseph Smith. The following statement by Joseph Smith was found in Halkett's notes:

"These are hieroglyphics, nobody can read them but myself. I can read **all** writing and **all** hieroglyphics . . ." (As quoted in *The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, page 257)

In his "King Follett Sermon" Joseph Smith made these statements:

. . . I shall comment on the very first Hebrew word in the Bible; I will make a comment on the very first sentence of the history of creation in the Bible, *Berosheit*. I want to analyze the word; *baith*, in, by, through, in, and every thing else. *Rosh*, the head. *Sheit*, grammatical termination. When the inspired man wrote it, he did not put the *baith* there. A man, a Jew without any authority, thought it too bad to begin to talk about the *head*. It read first, "The head one of the Gods brought forth the Gods," that is the true meaning of the words, *Baurau*, signifies to bring forth. If you do not believe it, you do not believe the learned man of God. **No man** can learn you more than what **I have told you** . . . I have an old book of the New Testament in the Hebrew, Latin, German and Greek. I have been reading the German and find it to be the most correct, . . . I know more than all the world put together, and the Holy Ghost within me comprehends more than all the world, and I will associate with it. The word *create* came from the word *baurau*; it does not mean so; it means to organize; the same as a man would organize a ship. . . . I have now preached a little Latin, a little Hebrew, Greek and German, and I have fulfilled all.—I am not so big a fool as many have taken me to be. The Germans know that I read the German correct. (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 5, pages 614, 615 and 617)

On one occasion Joseph Smith quoted from seventeen different languages:

Were I a *Chaldean* I would exclaim: Keed'nauh to-meroon lehoam elauhayauh dey-ahemayaua veh aur'kau lau gnaubadoo, yabadoo ma-ar'gnau comeen tehoat sheamyauh allah. (Thus shall ye say unto them: The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, they shall perish from the earth, and from these heavens.)

An *Egyptian*, Su-e-eh-ni. (What other persons are those?) A *Grecian*, Diabolos bssileuei. (The Devil reigns.) A *Frenchman*, Messieurs sans Dieu. (Gentlemen without God.) A *Turk*, Ain shems. (The fountain of light.) A *German*, sie sired unferstandig! (What consummate ignorance!) A *Syrian*, Zaubok! (Sacrifice!) A *Spaniard*, Il sabio muda conscio, il nescio no. (A wise man reflects, a fool does not.) A *Samaritan*: Saunau! (O stranger!) An *Italian*: Oh tempa! oh diffidanza! (O the times! O the diffidence!) A *Hebrew*: Ahtau ail rauey. (Thou God seest me.) A *Dane*: Hvad tidende! (What tidings!) A *Saxon*, Hwaet riht! (What right!) A *Swede*: Hvad skilia! (What skill!) A *Polander*: Nay-yen-shoo bah pon na Jesu Christus. (Blessed be the name of Jesus Christ.) A *western Indian*: She-mo-kah she-mo-keh teh ough-ne-gah. (The white man. O the white man, he very uncertain.) A *Roman*: Procul, O procul este profani! (Be off, be off ye profane!) But as I am I will only add; when the wicked rule the people mourn. (*The Voice of Truth* (1844), pages 16-17, as quoted in *No Man Knows My History*, by Fawn M. Brodie, page 292)

On April 15, 1844, the *Times and Seasons*, a Mormon publication, contained this statement by a man who had visited Nauvoo:

. . . I feel that I have met with the greatest, in the presence of your esteemed prophet, Gen. Joseph Smith. . . .

The General appears perfectly at home on every subject; and his familiarity with many languages affords his ample means to become informed concerning all nations and principles, . . . (*Times and Seasons*, April 15, 1844, Vol. 5, page 501)

Dr. James R. Clark, of Brigham Young University, states: "Joseph Smith was no **dilettante translator**" (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, page 102).

Dr. Nibley claims that *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* "was never completed, never released for publication, and, so far as we have been able to discover, never even mentioned in public" (*Improvement Era*, March 1968, page 18). Actually, Joseph Smith seemed to take his "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" very serious, for we find this statement in his *History of the Church*:

**The remainder of this month** [July, 1835], I was continually engaged in **translating an alphabet** to the Book of Abraham, and arranging a **grammar** of the Egyptian language as practiced by the ancients. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 238)

On October 1, 1835, we find Joseph Smith still working on the “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar”:

October 1.—This afternoon I **labored on the Egyptian Alphabet**, . . . and during the research, the principles of astronomy as understood by Father Abraham and the ancients unfolded to our understanding, . . . (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 286)

Joseph Smith may have considered publishing the “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar,” for this statement appears in his history under the date of November 15, 1843:

Wednesday, 15 — . . . P.M. At the office. Suggested the idea of preparing a grammar of the Egyptian language. (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, Vol. 6, page 79)

Dr. James R. Clark made the following comment on Joseph Smith’s statement:

This last entry is confusing. We are not sure just what the Prophet meant by the word “prepare.” Did he anticipate publishing? We do not know. (*Progress in Archaeology*, BYU, 1963, page 27)

Jay M. Todd is also somewhat confused by this reference, but he suggests it may have reference to preparing “wood-cuts and such for the press”:

Whatever the grammar and the alphabet were, it seems that they were not yet ready for publication. Joseph was still “preparing.” However, perhaps the preparing has reference to preparation of woodcuts and such for the press. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, by Jay M. Todd, Salt Lake City, 1969, page 252)

However this may be, Joseph Smith publicly used material from his “Egyptian Alphabet.” The reader will remember that when Joseph quoted seventeen different languages, one of them was the Egyptian language: “An Egyptian, Su-e-eh-ni. (What other persons are those?).” This is taken from Joseph’s “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar,” page A: “Sue-e-eh-ni What other person is that? Who.”

On November 13, 1843, Joseph Smith wrote a letter in which he stated:

Were I an Egyptian, I would exclaim Jah-oh-eh, Enish-go-on-dosh, Flo-ees-Flos-is-is; [O the earth! the power of attraction, and the moon passing between her and the sun.] (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 4, page 373)

Joseph Smith took this information from his “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar,” pages 29 and 30:

*Jah-oh-eh* The earth under the government of another or the second of the fixed stars, which is called *Enish-go-on-dosh* or in other words the power of attra[c]tion it has with the earth.

*Flo-ees*: The moon—signifying its revolutions, also going between, thereby forming an eclipse

*Flos-isis*: The sun in its affinity with Earth and moon—signifying their revolutions showing the power, the one has with the other

The problem goes much deeper than Joseph Smith quoting from his “Egyptian Alphabet” in his speeches, for when we examine the Book of Abraham we find that Joseph Smith actually uses some of the material from his “Egyptian Alphabet.” For instance, in his interpretation of Facsimile No. 2 Joseph Smith states:

Fig. 1. *Kolob*, signifying the first creation, nearest to the celestial, or the residence of God. First in government, the last pertaining to the measurement of time. The measurement according to celestial time, which celestial time signifies one day to a cubit. One day in Kolob is equal to a thousand years according to the measurement of this earth, which is called by the Egyptians *Jah-oh-eh*. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, Facsimile No. 2, Fig. 1.)

When we compare Joseph’s “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar,” page 26, we find that this is the source for the statement in the explanation of Facsimile No. 2:

Kolob signifies the first creation nearer to the Celestial, or the residence of God, first in government, the last pertaining to the measurement of time, the measurement according to Celestial time which signifies one day to a cubit which day is equal to a thousand years according to the measurement of this earth or *Jah-oh-eh*. (*Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*, page 26)

In his interpretation of Facsimile No. 2, Fig. 5, Joseph Smith uses the words “Enish-go-on-dosh,” “Kae-e-vanrash,” “Floeseese” and “Kli-flos-is-es.” These are all words taken from the “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar.” Richard P. Howard, Church Historian for the Reorganized LDS Church, makes these comments concerning this matter:

Therefore, since 1912 serious students of this subject have had to consider the probability that Joseph Smith had erred at many significant points in his interpretations of the drawings on the papyri, from part of which the text of the Book of Abraham itself was apparently derived. The implication of this is that if Joseph Smith erred in assessing the meanings of the papyri drawings, there is a strong likelihood that his interpretations of the ancient Egyptian language symbols on the papyri were inaccurate also.

A second development underscores this possibility: the publication in 1966 of a reproduction of a document known as Joseph Smith’s “Grammar and Alphabet of the Egyptian Language.” . . . This reproduction, if of an authentic original, **demonstrates significant connections** between some words in it and identical words used by

Joseph Smith in his interpretations accompanying the three facsimiles as published in 1842. It follows that if modern Egyptologists have or might yet clearly establish the inaccuracy of Joseph's interpretations of the three facsimiles, and if further research confirms the link already observed between Joseph's facsimile interpretations and his "Grammar and Alphabet of the Egyptian Language," then the reliability of the Book of Abraham as a translation of ancient records could no longer safely be maintained. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, page 91)

From the information we have presented above the reader will see that it is impossible to divorce Joseph Smith's "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" from his Book of Abraham. They must stand or fall together. Since Dr. Nibley has repudiated the "Egyptian Alphabet" the next logical step would be to repudiate the Book of Abraham itself.

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## 6. BOOK OF JOSEPH

The reader will probably remember that when Joseph Smith examined the papyrus rolls, he claimed that “one of the rolls contained the writings of Abraham, another the writings of Joseph of Egypt, . . .” (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 236).

An examination of the eleven fragments of papyrus which the Metropolitan Museum gave to the Mormon Church reveals that some of them are probably from the roll which the Mormon Prophet classified as the “Book of Joseph.” Fortunately, Oliver Cowdery, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, described the drawings contained in the “Book of Joseph.” Two or three of the fragments contain pictures that match Cowdery’s description. Oliver Cowdery’s description of the “Book of Joseph” appeared in the *Messenger and Advocate* in December 1835:

The representation of the god-head—three, yet in one, is curiously drawn to give simply, though impressively, the writers views of that exalted personage. The serpent,

represented as walking, or formed in a manner to be able to walk, standing in front of and near a female figure, is to me, one of the greatest representations I have ever seen upon paper, or a writing substance; and must go so far towards convincing the rational mind of the correctness and divine authority of the holy scriptures, as to carry away, with one mighty sweep, the whole atheistical fabric. . . . Enoch’s Pillar, as mentioned by Josephus, is upon the same roll. . . . The inner end of the same roll, (Joseph’s Record,) presents a representation of the judgment: At one view you behold the Savior seated upon his throne, crowned, and holding the sceptres of righteousness and power, before whom also, are assembled the twelve tribes of Israel, the nations, languages and tongues of the earth, the kingdoms of the world over which satan is represented as reigning, Michael the archangel, holding the key of the bottomless pit, and at the same time the devil as being chained and shut up in the bottomless pit. (*Messenger and Advocate*, Vol. 2, page 236)

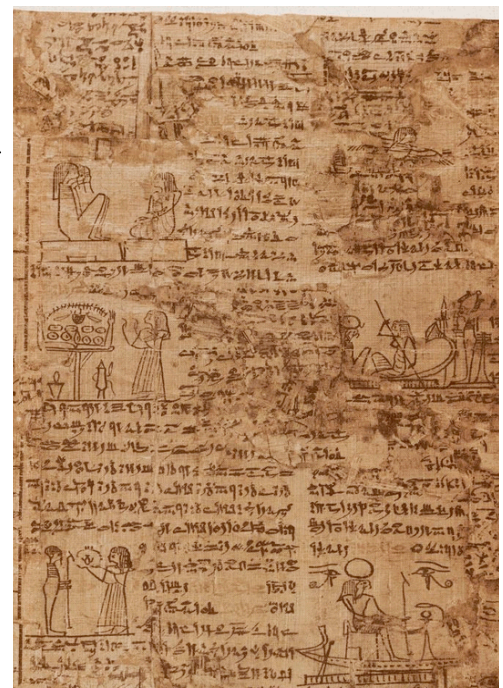
Below we have compared some of Cowdery’s statements with some of the fragments of papyrus which the Metropolitan Museum gave to the Mormon Church.



“The representation of the god-head—three, yet in one, is curiously drawn . . .”

← “The serpent, represented as walking, or formed in a manner to be able to walk, standing in front of, and near a female figure, is to me, one of the greatest representation I have ever seen upon paper, . . .”

← “Enoch’s Pillar, as mentioned by Josephus, is upon the same roll, . . .”







“The inner end of the same roll (Joseph’s Record,) presents a representation of the judgement: At one view you behold the Saviour seated upon his throne, crowned, and holding the sceptres of righteousness and power, . . .”

The Mormon writer Jay M. Todd has also noticed the similarity between the three fragments and Oliver Cowdery’s description:

The long description of Oliver Cowdery’s concerning drawings or scenes apparently on one of the scrolls is worthy of notice, particularly in view of some of the scenes on the papyri fragments recently rediscovered by Dr. Atiya. . . .

Curiously, scenes somewhat similar to these verbal descriptions seem to be on the papyri rediscovered by Dr. Atiya, papyri which have already been reported to be of the Book of the Dead. In fact, Dr. Hugh Nibley, Brigham Young University scholar and linguist appointed by the First Presidency to interpret and explain the papyri, titled Fragment IV the “Framed Trinity” papyrus. Fragment V, he titled “The Serpent with Legs,” and on this same fragment appears a scene which Oliver apparently described verbally as Enoch’s Pillar. Perhaps Oliver’s representation of the judgment, with the Savior on the throne, is depicted by fragment’s III A III B, which Dr. Nibley titled “Court of Osiris,” in which Osiris sits on the throne, and Thoth is recording. Osiris was the Egyptian god of the underworld and the judge of the dead. The source of Oliver Cowdery’s notions are not known, whether they were his personal thought, the Prophet’s personal thought, or the subject of inspired translation. Presumably, it could be from any of these sources. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, page 194)

Joseph Smith and his scribes evidently considered the drawing of the serpent with legs to be of importance,

for a copy of it was included in *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. Dr. James R. Clark, of Brigham Young University, stated:

There is a reproduction of that serpent with legs in the *Egyptian Grammar* as Joseph Smith or Oliver Cowdery copied it from the papyrus of Abraham or of Joseph. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, page 114)

Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of Brigham Young University, made this remark with regard to some of the material found in *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*:

Some of this material may be from the book of Joseph. Here Eve is apparently talking to the serpent. Notice, the serpent is on legs! Well, I am sure Dr. Clark can bring out more of this material. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., page 8)

The Mormon Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson, however, shows that the drawing of the serpent on legs is in reality from the Book of the Dead:

It shows the dead lady Ta-shert-Min standing, staff in hand, facing a great snake who is also standing upon human legs and feet. It is intended to illustrate a magical pronouncement called, “Spell for opening the feet (spreading the feet in the act of walking) and coming forth on earth (out of death).” The resurrection idea is certainly implied and the miraculous aspect of a serpent walking upon feet is intended to graphically represent the supernatural re-entry into a living state.

The 74th Chapter is not the only place in the Book of the Dead where a snake with legs is found. In older versions of these funeral texts the 87th Chapter is illustrated with a legged serpent, and in those few copies of the Per em Heru which are long enough to contain the 163rd Chapter it too is illustrated with a walking snake. . . .

The illustrations accompanying Chapter 74 in the Milbank Papyrus (Item 3, Plate 13) and the Ryerson Papyrus (Item 4) show the deceased behind, rather than in front of, the walking serpent. I rather believe that this is intended to indicate that the serpent leads the spirit of the dead individual out of Death's domain into the world of the living. Invariably the deceased holds a staff in his hand. The staff indicated that a long journey was involved. On the Ta-shert-Min Papyrus Fragment No. 2 the lady is seen standing with a walking staff in her hand (Chap. 65) and in the text we are told, . . . "Thou doest come forth among the multitude" and "I ask that my deceased kinsmen grant life to me (beyond the grave)." It was understood in the ancient Egyptian religion that it was a very long way from life to the land of the dead and back again. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Part 2, page 27)

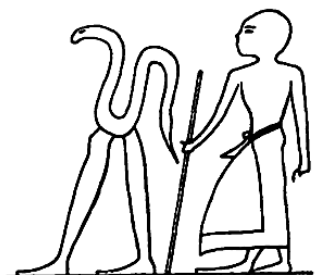
Below are two drawings by Dee Jay Nelson of walking serpents. The one to the right is from the Milbank Papyrus, and the one to the left is from the Ryerson Papyrus.

In the *Mormon Papyri Question*, published in 1968, we made these statements concerning the papyrus roll which the early Mormons called the "Book of Joseph":

In a letter to Grant Heward, I. E. S. Edwards, Keeper of the Department of Egyptian Antiquities at the British Museum, made this statement concerning the Mormon papyri:

It is not my intention to belittle the gift of the Metropolitan but it should be remembered that this papyrus has really **no antiquarian value**. Any Book of the Dead of **so late a date** is corrupt and there is no need to try to solve the corruptions because earlier texts lacking many of the errors exist. (Letter from I. E. S. Edwards to Grant Heward, dated December 20, 1967)

.....  
Evidently the Mormon leaders are willing to admit that part of the papyri belong to the Egyptian Book of the Dead. The *Deseret News* (a Mormon-owned newspaper) carried this statement:



From Milbank Papyrus

Included in the museum's presentation are a number of other papyri once in the possession of the Prophet.

These include conventional hieroglyphic and hieratic Egyptian funerary texts. Such papyri, including passages from the well-known Book of the Dead, were commonly buried with Egyptian mummies. (*Deseret News*, November 27, 1967, page 1)

.....  
Now that the Mormon leaders have admitted that at least part of the papyri are from the Egyptian Book of the Dead, they have placed themselves in a very precarious position. One of the drawings on the papyri was previously identified by the Mormons as part of the "Book of Joseph." This book was supposed to have been written by Joseph in Egypt thousands of years ago. . . .

When Josiah Quincy visited Nauvoo in 1844, Joseph Smith showed him the papyrus rolls. In the course of the conversation they discussed the serpent on legs. Josiah Quincy later wrote:

"And now come with me," said the prophet "and I will show you the curiosities." So saying, he led the way to a lower room. . . . Some parchments inscribed with hieroglyphics were then offered us. They were preserved under glass and handled with great respect. "That is the handwriting of Abraham, the Father of the Faithful," said the prophet. "This is the autograph of Moses, and these lines were written by his brother Aaron. Here we have the earliest account of the Creation, from which Moses composed the First Book of Genesis." The parchment last referred to showed a rude drawing of a man and woman, and a serpent walking upon a pair of legs. I ventured to doubt the propriety of providing the reptile in question with this unusual means of locomotion. "Why, that's as plain as a pikestaff," was the rejoinder. "Before the Fall snakes always went about on legs, just like chickens. They were deprived of them, in punishment for their agency in the ruin of man." We were further assured that the prophet was the only mortal who could translate these mysterious writings, and that his power was given by direct inspiration. (*Figures of the Past*, by Josiah Quincy, as quoted in *Among the Mormons*, edited by William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, 1958, pages 136-137)

These statements by Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery [concerning the drawing showing a serpent on legs] place the Mormon Church in a very difficult situation. If the Mormon leaders continue to maintain that this drawing is part of the "Book of Joseph," they



From Ryerson Papyrus

will be expected to furnish proof that it was written by Joseph in Egypt. Also, a translation of the Egyptian writing next to the drawing must relate to the creation or the early history of man rather than to Egyptian funerary texts. If, on the other hand, the Mormon leaders admit that it is from the Egyptian Book of the Dead, they will cast a shadow of doubt on Joseph Smith's work.

In a letter to John A. Wilson, Professor of Egyptology at the University of Chicago, Marvin Cowan asked this question:

"Book of Mormon sources claim that the papyrus showing a snake walking on two legs toward a man is the 'Book of Joseph.' Do you agree?"

John A. Wilson replied:

"You ask about one of the illustrations which shows a walking snake. It is just above three other illustrations all of which occur in regular order in late Books of the Dead. Papyrus Ryerson (about 500-200 B.C.) and Papyrus Milbank (about 356-100 B.C.), both in the Oriental Institute, published by T. George Allen, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, Chicago, 1960), with the texts here noted on Plates XXIV-XXV and LXCIII.

"In each papyrus, vignette of a man with a stick, along with a snake walking on two legs—vignette for Book of the Dead, Chapter 72.

"In each papyrus, next vignette in order shows a man with a stick, facing a column—vignette for B.D. 73.

"In Ryerson only, next vignette in order shows a man with a stick—vignette for B.D. 74.

"In each papyrus, next vignette shows a bird with a sceptre projecting from its back—vignette for B.D. 75." (Letter from John A. Wilson, January 5, 1968)

Richard A. Parker, Department of Egyptology at Brown University, likewise maintained that "The fragment with the snake walking on two legs is surely from some chapter of the Egyptian Book of the Dead." (Letter dated January 9, 1968)

Thus we see that the Mormon leaders are confronted with a serious problem. To claim that it is the writings of Joseph is to challenge the science of Egyptology, but to admit that it isn't amounts to discrediting Joseph Smith's work. It will be interesting to see which course the Mormon leaders will choose to follow with regard to this matter. (*The Mormon Papyri Question*, pages 13, 14, 16, 17 and 18)

Evidently the Mormon leaders have chosen to "cast a shadow of doubt on Joseph Smith's work," for in the *Improvement Era*, February, 1968, they admit that the drawing of the snake on legs is "from the Book of the Dead" (page 40).

When Dr. Nibley was asked if the papyri contained the Book of Joseph, he replied: "If the papyri contain any of the Book of Joseph it is not a part that has been translated" (Letter dated February 8, 1968).

On March 1, 1968, Sidney B. Sperry, James R. Clark and Ross T. Christensen discussed the "Book of Joseph":

DR. CHRISTENSEN: Personally, I wonder whether the seven sheets I said looked to me like hieratic are connected with the Book of Abraham or the Book of Joseph at all.

DR. SPERRY: It is just possible that out of the 11 papyri we now have, there is little or nothing of the Book of Joseph. However, it would seem to me, from my study of what the Prophet did, that he had translated that record and knew what was in it. There are references in the *History of the Church* which indicate the Prophet told other people something about its contents. I hope within my heart that some day the Book of Joseph will be found and acquired by the Church.

DR. CLARK: You are undoubtedly referring, Dr. Sperry, to Oliver Cowdery's letter to William Frye, published in the *Latter-day Saints Messenger and Advocate* of December, 1835, which definitely gives a brief description of the Book of Joseph. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A.*, Brigham Young University, March 1, 1968, page 8)

While it is probably true that we do not have all of the roll which the Mormon leaders described as the "Book of Joseph," it is very obvious that we have part of it. Since the part which we have is found to be nothing but the Egyptian Book of the Dead, it is obvious that Joseph Smith was mistaken when he stated that it contained "the writings of Joseph of Egypt."

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## 7. COMPLETE CONFUSION

It has been over two years since Egyptologists translated the fragment of papyrus Joseph Smith used as the basis for his “Book of Abraham,” yet Mormon apologists have not been able to explain how Joseph Smith “translated” the Book of Abraham from this pagan text—i.e., the Egyptian “Book of Breathings.” The dilemma facing these men is clearly demonstrated by Jay M. Todd’s recent work on the papyri. Mr. Todd, “an editor and staff writer for the *Improvement Era* magazine,” has written a 400-page book dealing with the papyri, yet he admits that he is unable to tell us the meaning of the papyri:

One major remaining issue remains still **undiscussed** in this background study, and that is **the meaning of the papyri themselves**. That issue shall **remain undiscussed**. Egyptologists in and out of the Church will address themselves to that area for some years to come. The import and significance of the papyri recently rediscovered will be told Latter-day Saints by Dr. Hugh Nibley, to whom the First Presidency has given the assignment. Surely his mind and hand will be blessed, and his report will be one of immense interest and significance to members of the Church. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, Salt Lake City, 1969, pages 387-388)

That a person could write a 400-page book concerning the papyri and not deal with their “meaning” is almost beyond belief! Mr. Todd does admit, however, that three handwritten manuscripts of the Book of Abraham have hieroglyphics taken from the “Sensen” text:

In the Church Historian’s Office are four handwritten copies of parts of our present Book of Abraham. . . .

Down the left-hand margin of the pages on copies 1, 3, 4 are some symbols, apparently Egyptian. Interestingly enough, the symbols appear to have been taken from the right-hand side of fragment “XI. Small ‘Sensen’ Text,” recently found by Dr. Atiya. The symbols appear in order on the hand-written copies, right to left, as they appear in the first several lines of the papyrus fragment. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, pages 318-319)

On page 322 of the same book, Mr. Todd makes this comment concerning the longer handwritten manuscript of the Book of Abraham (see photographs in our *Case*, Vol. 2, pages 147-151): “Careful check will show that Egyptian symbols on left are also in the ‘Small Sensen’ (No. XI), found by Dr. Atiya.” On page 321, Mr. Todd states: “One of the handwritten copies of the Book of Abraham. Note Egyptian symbols to the left of the English script; the relationship, if any, between the Egyptian and English is **unknown**.” On pages 377-380, Mr. Todd makes these comments concerning the “Sensen” text and its relationship to the Book of Abraham:

The scroll, according to Dr. Baer, was made for, a priest named Hor, for his death and mummification ceremonies.

Obviously, if this report by Dr. Baer is accurate, it suggests more than ever that either the papyrus “translated” by the Prophet is still unavailable or that the seer stone provided the actual text of which only a shadow and **much corrupted version** might have been on the papyri fragments. . . .

As readers are already aware, the relationship—if any—between the Egyptian symbols on some of the handwritten copies of parts of the Book of Abraham, and the text of the Book of Abraham and the appearance of these same Egyptian symbols on one of the papyrus fragments found in New York City is a **most intriguing concern**. Indeed, some critics of the Church are attempting to discredit the Book of Abraham and the Prophet by claiming that no relationship could exist between the symbols, and the Prophet was merely trying to deceive those around him when he permitted the symbols to be placed alongside the English text. Dr. Nibley has suggested, however, that if there is no relationship between the symbols and the text, then Joseph Smith would have seen none either, nor, from our knowledge of the Prophet’s character and personality, would he have attempted to deceive anyone by suggesting a relationship where he knew none existed. Indeed, Dr. Nibley has intimated that there still could be a relationship between the symbols and the English text of the Book of Abraham. Obviously, the matter of identifying the actual source of the Book of Abraham is still **unresolved**, . . .

The fact that Mr. Todd does not have any real answer to the problem is made plain by a number of statements found in his book:

However, if Joseph Smith did turn to the seer stone to read that which appeared, one wonders what—if anything—the Prophet received from the papyri in his possession. Perhaps the rolls contained a **perverted and corrupt version** of Abraham's thought, and consequently, it was necessary to turn to the seer stone for the original writings. Perhaps the Prophet did indeed have some papyri that miraculously had been preserved, papyri that contained the record of Abraham. And, if we understand correctly, the Prophet apparently turned to the seer stone for an English version of that which was on the papyri. This aspect of the story will apparently be told the Church by Dr. Hugh Nibley, under the direction of the First Presidency. We do know, however, that the Prophet was personally fascinated with the mummies and the papyri. He apparently regarded the records with some respect. Whatever, it is true that as a result of his experience with the Egyptian mummies and records, whether they served as a **catalyst** for further revelations or whether he was able to receive an English version of some symbols on a fragment in his possession through the seer stone, the Prophet Joseph was able to produce a new volume of scripture that was and is regarded as holy and sacred. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, pages 223-224)

... several leading elders of the Church and close personal friends of the Prophet who were associated with him in the production of the Book of Abraham have already testified that the Prophet received the Book of Abraham through the seer stone. This being the case, one wonders about the intrinsic value of the papyri. Was it really the handwriting of Abraham, as Josiah Quincy reported, or was it a **rewrite** of a **rewrite** of something that originally had been said by Abraham? ... Did the papyri indeed contain the present Book of Abraham, or was it a much corrupted version, of what originally had been written by Abraham, and thus, for his purpose also, the Prophet had to receive the original version through the seer stone? These are major questions. Perhaps their answers will not be known until that great day when all things are truly known.

... Fascinated as the Prophet was by them, intrigued as he was by languages, those close to him may have known the source whence had come the Book of Abraham and may not have been overly impressed with the Egyptian papyri. ...

Obviously, this view could be erroneous. Perhaps some of the papyri actually did contain the actual transcript of our Book of Abraham. It may be that the Prophet had told no one from which actual fragment had come the Book of Abraham, and because of this no one recognized the importance of any or all of the pieces. In time perhaps we shall know. But this much we do know, we do not know the answer now. (*Ibid.*, pages 288-290)

Before the papyri were located, Dr. James R. Clark was suggesting that the Book of Abraham was not really written in Egyptian symbols:

... I advanced the hypothesis, from a study of certain manuscripts of Joseph Smith's translation of the records of Abraham, that "the script of the text of the book of Abraham is **non-Egyptian**, that it was written in **non-Egyptian** symbols which, though abstract, would be understandable to Abraham's immediate descendants to whom he would pass the records of the fathers, even the patriarchs. This is substantiated in Abraham 1:28, 31. I also stated that an examination of his script and his translations, which gave the world the book of Abraham, raises serious doubt as to whether Abraham wrote in **Egyptian**, although he did use Egyptian glyphs to illustrate his text. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, Brigham Young University, 1964 ed., page 50)

Charles E. Haggerty apparently wrote his thesis concerning this idea. Dr. Nibley, however, ridiculed this view:

A new school of interpretation some years ago attempted to meet the challenge to and of the *Pearl of Great Price* by the face-saving thesis that the Book of Abraham was not written in Egyptian after all, but in "some Semitic language," and hailed this shifting of the discussion to more familiar grounds as putting "Book of Abraham investigation on a more sound and scholarly basis." But no studies were forthcoming on the new foundation save a few "primarily for the laymen ... making no claim of being ... learned or scientific." How, the ingenuous student may ask, can any study hope to be "sound and scholarly" without being at least a little learned and scientific? One should not enter the arena unless one is willing to meet more formidable opposition than the gullible student and tractable layman. (*Improvement Era*, February 1968, page 24)

Jay M. Todd, referring to Charlotte Haven's interview with Joseph Smith's mother, suggests that the Book of Abraham might have come from a Hebrew text:

But it is the reference to the manuscripts as having been in Hebrew and Sanskrit that is confusing. Could it be that Joseph Smith **did not translate Egyptian at all** but instead translated Hebrew? He had been a diligent student of Hebrew ...

The report causes one to wonder, simply because we do not have all of the papyri Joseph Smith had in his possession. Could it be that the story of Abraham came from a **Hebrew text and not an Egyptian one** as we have thought for so many years? One suspects not—but the door must be left open in case the report is accurate. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, page 248)

On pages 3-4 of this volume, we quoted from a study published by The Society For Early Historic Archaeology at Brigham Young University. This study suggested that the "Sen-Sen Papyrus was used as a **memory device** by Abraham (and perhaps by his descendants), each symbol or group of symbols bringing to mind a set number of **memorized phrases** relating to Abraham's account of

his life, or (2) that the hieratic words in the 'Alphabet and Grammar' are simply related to core-concepts in the corresponding English story of Abraham." Speaking of this study we stated: "The fact that The Society For Early Historic Archaeology at Brigham Young University would use this article in defense of the Book of Abraham reveals the weakness of their case." Strange as it may seem, some Mormons are taking this study serious. The following appeared in the *LDSSA Commentary*, published by the Latter-day Saint Student Association Institute of Religion:

Two University students, Richley Crapo and John Tvedtnes, have instituted a new approach to the study of Joseph Smith Papyri. This approach, which is quickly gaining support from LDS scholars, was prompted by the discovery by several leading Egyptologists that the translation of the Egyptian Sensen fragment, which **Joseph Smith directly connected to the Book of Abraham text, does not correspond to the Abrahamic story** as we have it in the *Pearl of Great Price*, nor does it deal with Abraham.

Crapo and Tvedtnes theorize that, while Abraham had nothing to do with the production of the Sensen text, the papyrus may have been used as a mnemonic device to support an oral tradition. (*LDSSA Commentary*, February 24, 1969)

In the March 27, 1969, issue of the same paper, Richley Crapo and John Tvedtnes wrote:

The rediscovery of the Joseph Smith Papyri in 1967 has facilitated further research into the origin and nature of the Book of Abraham and has made it possible to reformulate entirely our concepts about the process by which Joseph Smith produced the Book of Abraham. . . .

Lacking the original papyri or any significant amount of information about the materials which stimulated the writing of the Book of Abraham, the members of the Church have always assumed that book to have been a literal translation of a document written by the hand of Abraham himself. Now it is possible to supersede this naive view with a deeper understanding of the origins of that book. . . . One of the recently acquired papyri, it seems, is directly related to the Book of Abraham. Critics of the Church have labelled it the source from which the Book of Abraham was "translated."

Upon examination of the original papyrus fragments presented to the Church, we and others discovered that the Egyptian hieratic characters of the "preface" portion of the Small Sensen Fragment were essentially those contained in the left-hand column of Joseph Smith's notes concerning the Book of Abraham. These Egyptian words were juxtaposed in the order in which they occur on papyrus to verses from the Book of Abraham. It appears, therefore, that Joseph Smith connected the Book of Abraham to the Small Sensen Fragment. This conclusion is supported by the fact pointed out by Dr. Klaus Baer, a well-known Egyptologist, that the Small Sensen Fragment immediately followed and was originally attached to the left side of the papyrus bearing "Facsimile 1."

#### Funerary Document

Our own translation and those of several Egyptologists of the Small Sensen Fragment have demonstrated that this papyrus is part of an Egyptian funerary document. Its relationship to the Book of Abraham must, then, be something other than has long been thought. The possibility of its use as a mnemonic device in connection with an Abrahamic oral tradition was suggested by our further studies.

Jay M. Todd reproduces the study by Richley Crapo and John Tvedtnes; however, he asked Klaus Baer, an Egyptologist from the University of Chicago, for his opinion of it. In his reply Klaus Baer stated:

The English passages in the Book of Abraham corresponding to the Egyptian signs are long, and the parts cited by Crapo, in which he finds similarities to the Egyptian, are related to the whole by no visible principle—often they are a very secondary part of the text. This is most extreme in the case of the section corresponding to the Egyptian *py* ("the" or "this"); you are hardly going to find an English sentence without an article or a demonstrative, so what does the coincidence signify? Nothing. And the similarities are further weakened by such free associations as exemplified by the connection of the two parts of *s* ("pool," sometimes used for sections of the Nile) with "Egyptians," because they are people of the river, an expression **never used**, to my knowledge, by the ancient Egyptians in referring to themselves. By that method, similarities can be uncovered between any two texts so long as one is willing to look long enough and you're willing to use your imagination. The important thing: Unless we can show, in detail, how Joseph Smith obtained the Book of Abraham from the Egyptian text, applying a rational method that others could follow, we cannot speak of "translation" in any ordinary sense of the word, and this Crapo has not succeeded in doing, nor do I see how it can be done. Even if the signs were just key words somehow suggesting the text, the choice would be most strange, and one would expect, at the very least, to find Abraham mentioned, something to connect the Egyptian with the Book of Abraham. . . .

You can reach an impasse from another angle: Try to obtain the Book of Abraham from the papyrus by applying the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar (leaving aside the question where that came from). So far as I can tell, that won't work either. Willy-nilly, we are left with something completely isolated, whose connection with its material sources is non-rational. (Statement by Dr. Klaus Baer, as quoted in *The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, page 386)

Jay M. Todd makes these statements concerning Klaus Baer:

In order to obtain assistance in the appraisal of the work of Crapo and Tvedtnes, I requested the personal opinion of Dr. Klaus Baer on the matter. His opinion was sought for several reasons: he is an internationally regarded Egyptologist; he represents an honest non-Mormon-one of genuine good will—looking at the many



aspects concerning the Book of Abraham; he was willing to discuss his views. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, page 384)

On page 55 of the same book, Mr. Todd states that “Dr. Baer is one of America’s great and gifted minds!” Dr. Nibley does not seem to know what to do with the “Sensen” text. In the *Improvement Era* for January 1969, he wrote:

Neglected Evidence: Until now, all discussions of the authenticity of the Book of Abraham have been based on the assumption that we have to deal with only two really important sources of information: the Book of Abraham and the recently published papyri (*Era* February 1968). Everyone, it would seem, has taken for granted that if we know what the papyri really say, we are in a position to pass judgment on the authenticity of the Book of Abraham—a proposition diligently cultivated by some who have assumed that a knowledge of Egyptian qualifies one to pass judgment on matters that lie completely outside the field. Such a case might stand up if Joseph Smith had specifically designated particular papyri as the source of his information; but he never did so. Professor Klaus Baer begins and ends his exceedingly valuable study with the assertion that Joseph Smith **thought** he was actually translating the so-called “Breathing Permit.” Such testimony would not hold up for three minutes in any court of law. The only evidence for what the Prophet thought is the arrangement side by side of very brief Egyptian symbols and some lengthy sections of the Book of Abraham, which has led some to the hasty conclusion that the one column is a would-be translation of the other. . . . everyone we know who has ever looked at the two columns (and that includes many a puzzled student long before anybody knew what the Egyptian characters really meant) has been satisfied that the one could not by any effort of the imagination be a translation of the other. But what Mormon ever said it was? The opposition has simply assumed it in the face of the clearest evidence to the contrary; and on their own assumption, to which a knowledge of Egyptian has no relevance whatever, they have declared the Book of Abraham a fraud. (*Improvement Era*, January 1969, page 26)

In the *Brigham Young University Studies* for Autumn 1968, page 71, Dr. Nibley states:

Whatever translation comes by the gift and power of God is certainly **no translation in the ordinary sense**, and Joseph Smith never put forth the translation of the Book of Abraham as an exercise in conventional scholarship. . . . In every case in which he has produced a translation, Joseph Smith has made it clear that his inspiration is by **no means bound to any ancient text**, but is free to **take wings at any time**.

On pages 101-102 of the same article, Dr. Nibley made these comments concerning the relationship between the “Sensen” text and the Book of Abraham:

We still **suspect** that **there is a relationship between the two documents**, but **we don’t know what it is**.

On October 12, 1968, two graduate students in Near Eastern studies at the University of Utah, R. Crapo and J. A. Tvedtnes, presented an interesting hypothesis to explain the relationship between the Breathing Certificate and the Book of Abraham. . . . it seems that the idea is that if one takes the actual meaning of the hieratic signs in the order in which they occur, they can be roughly matched up with certain general themes of the Book of Abraham which occur in the same order. . . . This would make the “Sen-sen” papyrus a sort of prompter’s sheet. True, the document tells a connected and consistent story, but then it would have to do that in order to serve as an effective aid to memory by itself being easily memorized.

Far-fetched as it may seem, there are many ancient examples of this sort of thing, the best-known of which is the alphabet itself. . . . We are now being advised that “if we are to understand the Jewish authors correctly, we must examine their work carefully to see whether they contain a gematria,” that is, condensed and hidden code-writing, which turns up in the most surprising places.

. . . Heinrich Schafer noted that the famous Stele C14 in the Louvre “consists of sentences which read like the headings of chapters,” though they also make a connected text. We could, and in time probably will, furnish many examples of this sort of thing. In a preliminary statement in *Dialogue* it was suggested that the hieratic symbols placed over against the long sections of the Book of Abraham might be viewed not as texts but as topic headings. We still don’t know what the connection is, but one thing is certain—that the relationship between the two texts was never meant to be that of a direct translation.

Benjamin Urrutia wrote the following in an attempt to explain why Joseph Smith’s translation differs from that given by Egyptologists:

In this essay my main objectives shall be to prove that the two titles that have been ascribed to PJS (“The Breathing Permit of Hor” and “The Book of Abraham”) are both correct, and that the two translations that have been offered of PJS (one covering almost all of the book, even the parts that now have been lost, the other barely a fifth of the papyrus) are both good and acceptable translations, each in its own way. (I have a few minor objectives too).

The reasons that make the scholars “rage” and “imagine a vain thing” are that: a) Joseph’s translations of PJS is very different from their own; and b) the Book of Abraham is disproportionately long (136 very long verses) as contrasted to column I of PJS (less than 70 characters), the ground it covers.

These people obviously think they can have their cake and eat it, but they can’t have it both ways.

. . . .  
Joseph Smith, the Prophet, is known to have made three translations of ancient records, in this order: 1) The Book of Mormon; 2) The Inspired Version of the Bible; 3) The Book of Abraham. . . . what was the nature of the translation of the Book of Abraham? It was quite

different from either of the other two. To understand how it worked, we must learn something of the original and background of the book itself.

Abraham, . . . wrote the book that bears his name. This document was brought back to Egypt by Abraham's grandson, Israel.

But when "there arose up a new king over Egypt who knew not Joseph" (Ex. 1:8), what became of the sacred book? . . .

The best way to save the book would have been **to camouflage it** to look like an Egyptian document instead of a Semitic one. Most likely it was already written in Egyptian characters, but that wasn't enough.

An enterprising Hebrew, whom we shall call X, conceived a code in which **every character** of a Mizraite funerary inscription, with only a few minor (though significant) changes, was the equivalent of **two verses**, more or less, of the book he was trying to save, the original of which no longer exists. There even exists the possibility (it would be more farfetched, but also more logical) that X actually created "The Breathing Permit of Hor" (BPH), to suit his purposes, and later the Egyptians accepted it as sacred, without suspecting its origin. . . . the Book of Abraham plus X's manipulations equals the Papyrus Joseph Smith.

But once the BA was rendered into code, what chance was there of ever decoding it again? X being dead, the secret was lost, and not a convention of **all the world's cryptographists** could find it again. The book was in all appearance, and even in reality, "The Breathing Permit of Hor." What was there to be done? What was the key to the lost code? The answer: the Urim and Thummim: . . .

When Moses left Egypt, he took a copy of the BPH with him. Since he had the Urim and Thummim, the Book of Abraham was brought to light a second time. (It must have helped Moses in the writing of his own books). . . .

Of course, the papyrus we have is not the original, but a late copy of Saitic times. Mormon and Gentile agree on this. . . . it should also be clear that this "translation" was **not** a translation in the usual sense of the word (as that of the Inspired Version was not, either), and that no man, no matter how wise or imaginative, could have done it by any normal means. . . . Therefore, my friends, cease raging, cease imagining vain things. Joseph was a prophet, not a linguist. Dr. Baer is a linguist, not a prophet. Each of these men did what he could do, and admirably well, but he could not have done the same kind of translation the other did (even from the same document). (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1969, pages 130, 131 and 134)

Richley H. Crapo and John A. Tvedtnes have recently written an article in which they state:

There is no evidence of the Sen-Sen text having existed prior to 600 BC. Considering all logical possibilities, one could contend that the non-existence of the document prior to that date is unprovable, lack of evidence not being a proof. . . . True, the lack of an example of the Sen-Sen text of age greater than 600 BC does argue

against any direct contact between Abraham himself and this text. On the other hand, it is possible to consider Abraham as having authored his own story in oral form, and this oral tradition, after being passed down, as having been adapted (ca. 600 BC) to the Egyptian document by a follower of Abraham, for mnemonic purposes. At this period of history, many Jewish colonies are known to have existed in Egypt.

Considering Abraham, then, as the author of the Book of Abraham, we have the following as possible relationships of the Sen-Sen text to that book:

a. Abraham wrote the Sen-Sen text as a mnemonic device.

b. Abraham used the already extant Sen-Sen text as a mnemonic device.

c. Abraham wrote his story and others adapted the written account to the Sen-Sen text, thus making Abraham's story an oral account.

Another approach would be to attribute authorship of the Abraham story, as we know it, **not** to Abraham himself, but to his followers of a later date, on the basis of pre-existing traditions regarding Abraham. Though a logical possibility, one need not in this case attribute authorship of the Sen-Sen text (with its **pagan** content) to these followers who used it. Two possible relationships would fit this situation:

a. The followers composed the Sen-Sen text for use as a mnemonic device in connection with an **oral** account passed down from Abraham himself.

b. The followers composed the Abraham story, based on **oral** traditions passed down to them (and perhaps some sayings actually attributed to Abraham), building it around the already extant Sen-Sen text.

Finally, exhausting the logical possibilities, one may consider **Joseph Smith as the "author"** of the Abraham story, on the basis of inspiration rather than translation. In this case, the Sen-Sen document would be a purely Egyptian one, never having even been seen by Abraham himself, but a document which did provide a message which acted as a "springboard" for the mind of the Prophet to seek inspiration about the meanings of the individual words, which, as we have shown, he must have understood, and the relationship of these to the story of Abraham, with which the Prophet felt them to be connected. And, of course, a logical (though improbable) possibility is a purely modern, uninspired authorship. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A.*, Brigham Young University, June 2, 1969, pages 11-12)

These statements clearly demonstrate the great lengths Mormon writers will go to in their attempt to save the Book of Abraham. It seems they will propose almost any fantastic thesis rather than accept the simple truth that the Book of Abraham is a spurious work. These new theories certainly are not in harmony with Joseph Smith's statements concerning the papyrus and the translation. Joseph Smith never mentioned anything about a "mnemonic device" or "super-cryptograms"; instead, he clearly stated ". . . I commenced the **translation** of some of the characters or hieroglyphics, and much to our joy

found that one of the **rolls contained the writings of Abraham**, . . . (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 236). In one of Joseph Smith's speeches he definitely claimed that he received information by translating the papyri:

I learned it by translating the papyrus which is now in my house. I learned a testimony concerning Abraham, . . . (*History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 476)

On still another occasion Joseph Smith claimed that the Book of Abraham was "a correct translation" (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 351). If the Book of Abraham is not a literal translation of the papyrus then the introduction to it which appears in the *Pearl of Great Price* is a misrepresentation for it plainly states:

**Translated from the Papyrus, by Joseph Smith.**

A translation of some ancient Records, that have fallen into our hands from the catacombs of Egypt.—The writings of Abraham while he was in Egypt, called the Book of Abraham, written by his own hand, upon papyrus. (*Pearl of Great Price*, page 29)

## Winning a Point

It is now evident that Mormon apologists are in deep trouble over the Facsimiles that are included in the Book of Abraham. The reader will remember that Dr. Nibley claimed that the Facsimiles were not altered. In the *Improvement Era* for September 1968, Dr. Nibley claimed that "evidence that Facsimile 1 has been honestly reproduced is found in an . . . old portrait of Lucy Mack Smith, . . ." He claimed that the drawing showed the "**original papyrus** hanging on the wall," and that it "matches our printed reproductions, and not the proposed restoration."

Wesley P. Walters located the original drawing and scholars recognized immediately that this was not a drawing of the original papyrus, but rather a drawing from the *Times and Seasons* reproduction. Even the "Figure numbers" were plainly visible in Wesley P. Walter's photograph (see page 42 of this book). The Mormon writer Jay M. Todd seems willing to concede that this is not a drawing of the papyrus, but only the *Times and Seasons* copy:

It is apparently a painting of the 1842 *Times and Seasons* newspaper representation, prepared by Hedlock. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, page 212)

He admits that Wesley P. Walters has located the original painting and calls him the "re-discoverer of the painting for the Latter-day Saints community" (*Ibid.*, page 213). On page 214 of the same book, Jay M. Todd states:

In fairness to Dr. Nibley, his report was made before the actual painting was found to permit close examination.

However, hardly had the ink dried on the September *Era* before observers began to offer counter viewpoints. One of the more thorough came from James Boyack, Marblehead, Massachusetts: . . .

Other observers have noted that the same "explanation" numbers appearing in the Book of Abraham reproduction of Facsimile No. 1 for purposes of "explanation" are also visible on a magnified version of the Lucy Mack Smith painting. All in all, it is a minor issue, but of such are the skirmishes of scholarly wars, and the drive for the pursuit of truth.

Dr. Nibley stated that "there can be no doubt that it is the original papyrus hanging on the wall, for the artist has taken pains to show the bent and wrinkled surface." Jay M. Todd, however, states that "the ripple is in the canvas and not a 'painted ripple'" (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, page 216).

Dr. Nibley was finally pressured into retracting his statement about the portrait. While this retraction appeared in the *Brigham Young University Studies*, which has a far smaller circulation than the *Improvement Era*, it is certainly a step in the right direction. Dr. Nibley now admits that he "overlooked" the numbers, and that it was only "after the article went to press" that he got his first good look at the picture. In a dialogue between himself and the opposition, Dr. Nibley states:

They: Speaking of naive suggestions, when you used that portrait of Lucy Mack Smith to guarantee the integrity of Facsimile No. 1 "before it was damaged," why didn't you call attention to the numbers indicating some of the figures in the pictures? The numbers weren't part of the original papyrus, you know.

We: We completely **overlooked** the numbers until after the article went to press. Only then did we get our **first** good look at the picture. So **you win a point**. We now assume that the artists consulted the Hedlock reproduction. (*BYU Studies*, Autumn 1968, page 82)

On pages 98 and 99 of the same article we find the following:

They (by letter): You admit that the sketch of Facsimile No. 1 in the Lucy Mack Smith portrait has the Hedlock numbers on it; yet you think it significant that it may indicate the actual state of preservation of the papyrus at the time the portrait was made. How do you reconcile the two propositions?

We: Well, naturally the artist would not keep his model sitting and suffering while he sketched in the little picture on the wall; with plenty of Hedlock reproductions going around he could easily fill in that part at his leisure—so he did. But at the same time he made an undeniable effort to indicate that the framed thing on the wall really was the original. Better photographs

accent the wrinkling and the frame, and it still remains unthinkable that the old lady should have displayed a mere printed copy—the only “original” Hedlock would be a wood-block!

Even though Dr. Nibley now admits that the printed reproduction was “consulted” he still maintains that the portrait furnishes evidence concerning the state of the papyrus:

. . . in examining the portrait closely we discovered something of importance that is not discernible in *The Improvement Era* reproduction, something that is not in the Hedlock drawing. The artist has drawn a jagged line right across the top of the facsimile, cutting off the top both of the priest’s head and of the bird’s head but leaving the rest, including the knife in the priest’s hand, untouched. The area above the jagged line is of a slightly lighter shade than that below, and in the original may be of a different color. It seems to mark the limit of the papyrus, i.e., of the damage to the thing, at some time after the Mormons had acquired it. It is nearly all there. In other things also the painter of Mrs. Smith’s portrait departs from the Hedlock engraving.

They: What about the wrinkling? It seems to us that some of the wrinkles supposedly in the papyrus extend right out beyond and include the picture frame.

We: The paint could have run where the artists made extra-heavy vertical markings (providing he used water colors), or else the wrinkles could belong to the big portrait itself, of which we have only a photograph. But the picture frame is clearly a frame, closely resembling the one in which other papyri are still mounted, and **most** of the wrinkling is definitely confined within its borders as if it really belonged to the papyri. (*BYU Studies*, Autumn 1968, pages 82-85)

It is hard to believe that Dr. Nibley would continue to try to see things in this portrait, especially after he had to admit that it contains the figure numbers from the printed facsimile. Wesley P. Walters wrote a letter to Dr. Nibley which he has given us permission to quote. The following statements are from his letter:

. . . I was surprised to see you still drawing conclusions from the Lucy Smith portrait, and yet you have never seen the original.

I have seen the original water color and can assure you that none of the points you have been making on the basis of poor photographs are correct. The wrinkles are not painted-in wrinkles, but wrinkles in the paper on which the entire painting was made. This can be seen from the enclosed photo, . . .

There is **no painted-in line** across the top as you try to indicate in your article. The color close-up inclosed should make this clear. What makes it appear to be a line in the photo you reproduced is partly due to the way the shadows made by the wrinkles in the paper fall. It is also

due partly to the contrasty nature of the print which over-emphasized the streaky nature of the painting itself. As a person who did water colors all through high school and college, I can assure you that it is extremely difficult to get the color to flow evenly without settling more densely in at least one or two areas. This is the type of thing that has occurred in the area above the head of the reclining figure. This same type of spottiness occurs over the entire background behind Lucy Smith.

If you would make the effort to see the original in Chicago, I believe that even you would be convinced. It would at least save you the necessity of making retractions and would be far more fitting to one’s posture as a scholar. (Letter dated January 23, 1969)

Dr. Hugh Nibley is now willing to admit that the human head on the standing figure in Facsimile No. 1 is an error, but he tries to blame it onto the Egyptian artist:

We: Well, you do go so far as to assume without question that the priest in Facsimile No. 1 should have a jackal’s mask. And you are quite right—he **should** have, and the human head is an **error**. But whose error?

They: Whose could it be but Smith’s?

We: Smith didn’t need an unmasked priest—a mask would have been just as impressive perhaps. But let us call your attention to at least three Ptolemaic lion-couch scenes closely paralleling this one in which the artist has deliberately drawn the embalming priest without a jackal mask. (*BYU Studies*, Autumn 1968, page 98)

## Admits Restorations

On pages 14 through 18 of this volume evidence was presented which showed that the original of Facsimile No. 2 was damaged when Joseph Smith worked with it and that he made false restorations from the Book of the Dead and Book of Breathings papyri which he had in his possession. Dr. Nibley, however, maintained that Facsimile No. 2 had not been falsified:

Then too, we must recognize that there are sections of hieroglyphic text in Facsimile 2 that present-day Egyptologists read without too much trouble: since these legible portions are found to be correct and conventional Egyptian, it is perfectly plain that nobody has **falsified or jumbled them**, as was charged. That is to say, whenever the text can be checked, **everything is found to be in order**. (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, page 74)

We were, of course, very disturbed to find that Dr. Nibley would deny these false restorations in the face of documented proof. We republished the evidence in the November 1968 issue of the *Salt Lake City Messenger* and were able to distribute thousands of copies. It seems that truth has prevailed, for Dr. Nibley now admits that “restorations” were made in Facsimile No. 2:

(4) The Hedlock engraving when compared with an early sketch showing parts of Facsimile No. 2 to be **missing** shows **definite signs** of **attempted restoration**.

(5) The restoration was not as extensive as the other sketch would indicate, and no clear instances of such have been demonstrated on Facsimile No. 1.

(6) The **restorations** on Facsimile No. 2 are limited to the **filling in of gaps**, not the alteration of existing symbols. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Autumn 1968, page 951)

Dr. Nibley even points out a false “restoration” we had not noticed: “The feet of Figure 2, on the other hand, facing as they do in the **wrong direction**, we agree to call a **restoration**” (*BYU Studies*, Autumn 1968, page 92).

Even though Dr. Nibley now admits that restorations were made, he seems unwilling to face the implications:

They: Let’s turn to Facsimile No. 2, where we have much clearer evidence of restoration. In the Church Historian’s Office among the papers of the EAG is a rather well-done pen-and-ink sketch of the facsimile made by some Mormon at an early date. This, we believe, is the way the hypocephalus looked when it came into Joseph Smith’s hands; and in it there are certain parts missing and we are shown exactly what they are. Now these parts are *not* missing in the official engraving of the hypocephalus, Facsimile No. 2, which can only mean that they have been later supplied. You will notice that a large part of the inscription around the rim is **missing**, and this has been filled in with hieratic characters from other papyri definitely known to have been in the possession of Joseph Smith. So there you have it.

We: Since the **restored** portions of the rim with their crude repetitions (hardly an attempt to be subtle) are not a subject of inspired commentary, we don’t think that is too important. (*BYU Studies*, Autumn 1968, pages 86-87)

Although Joseph Smith does not try to translate the writing around the rim, he states that it “will be given in the own due time of the Lord” (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, page 35). We feel that this matter cannot be as easily dismissed as Dr. Nibley would have us believe. To begin with, it shows that Joseph Smith knew absolutely nothing about the Egyptian language, for the portion which is added from the “Book of Breathings” is written in hieratic, whereas the writing that appears on Facsimile No. 2 is hieroglyphic writing. Also, the characters that were added into the blank area were added upside down, so that they read in the opposite direction to the rest of the text. The Mormon Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson states: “For a Sensen (Book of Breathings) inscription to be written upon a hypocephalus is about as logical as to find part of the Koran in the New Testament” (*Joseph Smith’s “Eye of Ra,”* page 22)

We feel that this matter also reflects seriously upon Joseph Smith’s honesty. Scholars, of course, do not object to restorations in a text if they are sincere attempts

to restore a missing portion. For instance, in 1961 a stone inscription was found at Caesarea. The second line was damaged, but scholars were able to read “. . .tius Pilate” (*The Biblical World*, edited by Charles E. Pfeiffer, page 156). Since Pontius Pilate had resided in Caesarea, they felt that it was reasonable to restore “Pon” to complete the name “Pontius Pilate.” This type of restoration is reasonable. In Joseph Smith’s case, however, it seems to be an attempt to deceive rather than to restore what was on the original document. No one who is honest with himself could approve of these false restorations. How can we possibly trust the rest of Joseph Smith’s Book of Abraham after seeing what he did with Facsimile No. 2?

While Dr. Nibley has not translated the writing on Facsimile No. 2, he has made some admissions which tend to confirm Nelson’s work. The following statements appear in the *Improvement Era*:

We must not overlook the fact that the name *Iwnw* or Heliopolis, occurring twice in the inscription around the rim of Facsimile No. 2, definitely associates the facsimile with the Heliopolitan cult. (*Improvement Era*, March 1969, page 80)

It is an interesting coincidence that the name of Sheshonk (or Shishaq) is the one hieroglyphic word readily identified and unanimously agreed upon by the Egyptologists who have commented on Facsimile No. 2, where the name appears as Figure 8. How all this fits into the picture remains to be seen. (*Ibid.*, April 1969, page 72)

The reader will remember that Dee Jay Nelson read the name “Shashaq” in Figure 8 of Facsimile No. 2. He also found the word “Heliopolis” twice in Figure 18 (see *Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 3, page 29).

It is very obvious that Dr. Nibley is just stalling with regard to the Facsimiles. In an article published in the *Brigham Young University Studies*, Dr. Nibley states:

The ball goes back and forth—sometimes “they” make a point, and sometimes “we” do, but the final score is far in the future. The first thing everybody asked when the discovery of the papyri was announced was either “Does this prove the Book of Abraham?” or “Doesn’t this show that Joseph Smith was wrong?” Does a falling apple prove Newton’s laws? Only to people with an awful lot of training and preparation, and no longer to many of them. The scholar is not alive today who can tell us all there is to be known about the facsimiles, and until we know that the game must still go on. . . .

The facsimiles were originally intended as visual aids for an unspecified audience. Nothing supernatural, inspired, or sacrosanct is claimed for them. The Latter-day Saints made no special efforts to retain them in their possession, and after they were lost were careless and indifferent in the manner of their reproduction.

. . . we cannot answer the question, “What are the facsimiles?” until we know **everything** there is to know about them. (*BYU Studies*, Autumn 1968, pages 95 and 99)

Dr. Nibley realizes the problems connected with the Facsimiles and has tried to play down their importance. He goes so far as to state that the three Facsimiles are “**not** an integral part of the Book of Abraham” (see *Improvement Era*, March 1968, page 18). The text of the Book of Abraham, however, bears witness to the fact that Joseph Smith intended people to believe that Abraham had made the drawings. Abraham was supposed to have said:

... the priests laid violence upon me, that they might slay me ... upon this altar; and that you may have a knowledge of this altar, I will refer you to the **representation at the commencement** of this record.

It was made after the form of a bedstead, ... and it stood before the gods

That you may have an understanding of these gods, I have given you the fashion of them in the figures at the beginning, ... (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, 1:12-14)

Faced with this evidence which ties the Facsimiles to the text, Dr. Nibley goes so far as to suggest that the statement attributed to Abraham may have been an interpolation by a later scribe:

And when Abraham tells us, “That you may have an understanding of these gods. I have given you the fashion of them in the figures at the beginning,” we do **not** need to imagine the patriarch himself personally drawing the very sketches we have before us. In fact, the remark may well be the **insertion of a later scribe**. (*BYU Studies*, Autumn 1968, page 78)

We feel that it is not possible to divorce the Facsimiles from the text of the Book of Abraham, and that the text of the Book of Abraham and the Facsimiles stand or fall together. The Mormon writer William E. Berrett made this statement:

The **translation** made by Joseph Smith, and facsimiles of some of the engravings, remain as one of the greatest contributions to the field of religion. ...

No prophet ever gave to the world a stronger challenge of his divine calling than did Joseph Smith in his publication of the Book of Abraham. (*The Restored Church*, by William E. Berrett, Salt Lake City, 1956, page 144)

This challenge has been accepted, and it has been shown that Joseph Smith had absolutely no understanding of the Egyptian language. His interpretations of both the text and the Facsimiles have been proven untrue; therefore, the Book of Abraham is a spurious production.

## New Developments

In the *Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 2, pages 135 and 136, we indicated that there may have been more to the story of Dr. Atiya’s “discovery” of the papyri than was published by the LDS Church. The Mormon writer Jay M. Todd makes these rather interesting statements in his book, *The Saga of the Book of Abraham*:

The announcement on that long-to-be-remembered Monday, November 27, 1967, literally stunned and surprised countless hundreds of thousands of Latter-day Saints: ...

Within a matter of hours, nearly an entire Church’s interest was piqued, and everywhere people clamored to know more about the papyri. ...

And indeed, there is much more to the story than has been reported. More than even I will report. There are some aspects of the story—due to reasons of propriety and personalities—that should remain out of public discourse for some years yet, simply because it is the wisest course to do so. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, page 333)

It is reported by Dr. Hugh Nibley that some Egyptologists, Egyptian museum curators, and other non-Mormon scholars have known about the existence of the papyrus fragments—and their relationship to the Church—since as early as 1902! For 65 years! (*Ibid.*, page 338)

As already suggested, neither of the two reports—Dr. Atiya’s nor Taza’s—contain all the elements of the rediscovery. In time, more information will undoubtedly seep into public consciousness. (*Ibid.*, page 343)

Obviously, there exist two different stories—Dr. Atiya’s and Dr. Fischer’s—about who motivated whom to inform the Church. (*Ibid.*, page 346)

Dr. Hugh Nibley has said in private discussion that as early as 1902 some Egyptologists in America have known about the location of some papyri owned by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Apparently in 1902 some persons from the Midwest came to the University of Chicago and either showed the papyri to or informed Dr. James Henry Breasted, professor of Egyptology and Oriental history, about the papyri. Since then, the identity and location of the papyri were rather common knowledge among the scholars at the Oriental Institute at Chicago, but a subject which no one would consider passing on to members of the Church. (*Ibid.*, pages 347-348)

Jay M. Todd admits that Walter Whipple, a Mormon scholar, knew of the papyri for about five years before Dr. Atiya “discovered” them:



The remarkably complex, unusual, and interesting story of the mummies and papyri has another strange twist. Apparently, as **early as 1962** a Latter-day Saint who knew the import and value of the papyri learned of their location at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He even received pictures of them. . . .

Brother Whipple is a master's degree graduate from Brigham Young University and received his degree on the Book of Abraham some years ago. Normally, few people in the world would know the import of such a find more than such a person. However, in hindsight, perhaps it is **better** that a scholar such as Dr. Atiya made the discovery. Certainly his name has opened many doors and lent much respect to the discovery. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, pages 350-351)

In the *Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 2, pages 137-138, we show that the Mormon leaders had an actual fragment of papyrus in the Church historian's Office which they suppressed until after we printed a photograph of it. Jay M. Todd now admits that Dr. James R. Clark, of Brigham Young University, knew about this fragment for thirty years but was told to suppress this information:

Outside of a few associates, Dr. Clark had kept the fragment a **matter of confidence, under instructions from the historian's office, for over 30 years.** (*The Saga of the Book Abraham*, page 364)

## A Real Victory

In a letter, dated September 15, 1968, the Mormon Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson wrote:

Does it not impress you that the facts against the Book of Abraham are coming one on the heels of another? I believe that God has decided that the time is right that these untruths (The Book of Abraham) be unmasked (in this decade). Do you not also think that God is blessing us greatly by giving us this chance to serve His purposes!

We feel that we would be very ungrateful if we did not acknowledge the hand of God in this work, for He has blessed it in a wonderful way. We are able to testify that God "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Ephesians 3:20).

In an article published in the *New York Times*, May 3, 1970, Wallace Turner wrote:

SAN FRANCISCO, May 2—The "Book of Abraham," which provides the theological basis for the Utah Mormon churches excluding Negroes from its priesthood, has been described as "simply the product of Joseph Smith Jr.'s imagination" by a leading scholar in a branch of the church Mr. Smith founded.

It was the Book of Abraham that Mr. Smith produced as a translation of papyri he acquired along with four Egyptian mummies in 1835. . . .

The description of the Book of Abraham as the product of Joseph Smith's imagination is in an article entitled "The 'Book of Abraham' in the Light of History and Egyptology," printed in the pilot issue of *Courage: A Journal of History, Thought and Action* issued for members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

The author is Richard P. Howard, historian for the church branch commonly called RLDS, the largest of the groups that splintered away from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints . . .

Mr. Howard pointed out that the publication in 1966 by Modern Microfilm Company of Salt Lake City of Joseph Smith Jr.'s original "Egyptian alphabet and grammar" allowed scholars to discover how the prophet worked in producing the Book of Abraham.

Mr. Howard cited the work of Dee Jay Nelson, an elder in the Utah Mormon Church and a philologist with 20 years' experience in Egyptology. Mr. Nelson took two words from the papyrus fragment and showed their translation properly to be "offspring of" or "born of."

Joseph Smith Jr. produced a 132-word passage in the Book of Abraham and attributed it to those words, Mr. Howard wrote. He also suggested that the Prophet Joseph used the "curse of Ham" argument against Negroes as a means of reconciling differences that arose among his followers when Elijah Abel, a Negro, was ordained into the priesthood March 3, 1836, . . .

"Whatever the intent of Joseph Smith in expounding this view of the Negro," Mr. Howard wrote, "it is clear that the ancient papyri from Egypt contained no such information."

Mr. Howard wrote that "it may be helpful to suggest that the 'Book of Abraham' represents simply the product of Joseph Smith Jr.'s imagination, wrought out in the midst of what to him must have been a very crucial and demanding complex set of circumstances." (*New York Times*, May 3, 1970)

For many years the *Salt Lake Tribune* refused to take articles critical of the Mormon Church. Times are changing, however, for the article quoted above was printed in the *Salt Lake Tribune* on May 4, 1970. While the part concerning the Mormon Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson was not included, the *Salt Lake Tribune* contains some additional material concerning the Book of Abraham. In an article entitled "LDS Affirm 'Abraham'" we find the following:

The First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints accepts the "Book of Abraham" as "scripture given to us through the Prophet (Joseph Smith)," President N. Eldon Tanner said Sunday night.

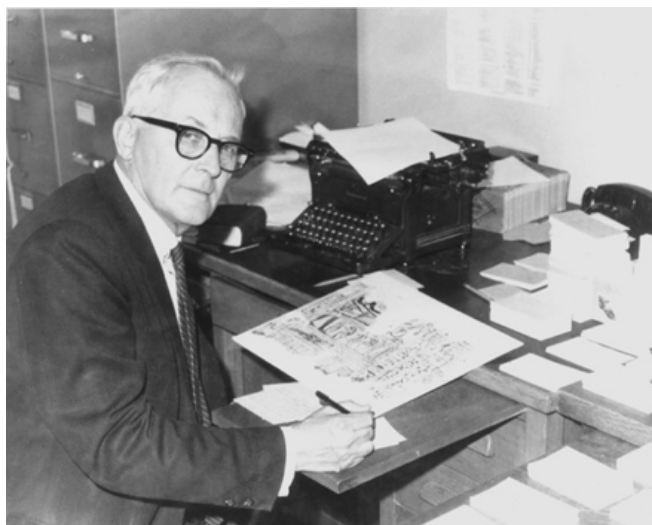
President Tanner, second counselor in the church's First Presidency, made the statement in response to an article saying the translation of the "Book of Abraham" was the product of Joseph Smith Jr.'s "imagination."

The article appears in a publication of the Reorganized Church . . . Author of the article is Richard P. Howard, historian for the RLDS. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, May 4, 1970)

That the Utah Mormon leaders would continue to endorse the Book of Abraham in the face of the evidence which has been presented is almost beyond belief.

### Filibuster Ends

As we have already pointed out, Dr. Hugh Nibley, of Brigham Young University, was assigned by the Church leaders to give a report to the people on the papyri. He began a series of articles for the *Improvement Era* in January, 1968. This series of articles ran for over two years, and was finally brought to a conclusion with the issue published May, 1970. Although Dr. Nibley was supposed to unfold “the meaning of the hieroglyphics” in this series of articles, we predicted that he would not publish a translation of the papyri. In February, 1970, the *Brigham Young University Alumnis* published the following photograph of Dr. Nibley working with the papyri.



The caption under the picture in the *Brigham Young University Alumnis* contained this statement: “Dr. Hugh Nibley works at **translating** some of the papyri donated recently to the Church.” If Dr. Nibley was actually working on a translation of the papyri, it is very doubtful that it will ever be published. He has now had photographs of the papyri for four years, and the series of articles which ran for over two years in the *Improvement Era* has been completed without a translation of the papyri. It would appear that Dr. Nibley’s main objective in this series of articles was to blind the eyes of his fellow Church members so that they could not see the real issues involved in this matter. Although he used

almost 2,000 footnotes, he never did deal with the main problem. In the issue for August, 1969, Dr. Nibley made this fantastic statement:

From here on the reader might as well know that this writer intends to show that the Book of the Dead fragments, the Breathing Papyrus, and the three facsimiles, that is, all the available Egyptian materials that were once in the possession of Joseph Smith, contain the elements of a single story, which happens to be the story of Abraham as told in the Book of Abraham and the early Jewish legends. (*Improvement Era*, August 1969, page 75)

Dr. Nibley’s concluding article makes it clear that he was unable to demonstrate any relationship between the papyri and the Book of Abraham. Nevertheless, he encourages members of the Mormon Church to go on stalling lest they be accused of “forfeiting the game”:

Since the basic charges against Joseph Smith emerging from the study of the newly found papyri have **not** been discussed in the pages of the *Era*, it may be well to review them briefly here. Two documents of the Joseph Smith Papyri were identified and translated in 1967/8, the one comprising sections from the Book of the Dead, the other being the much rarer but still not unknown “Sen-sen” Papyrus or “**Book of Breathings.**” **Neither of these texts contained the same reading matter as the Book of Abraham**, but who said they should? . . .

What supports the idea that the Book of Abraham was thought by Joseph Smith to be a translation of the Breathing Certificate? Two things: first, that the “Breathing text” was originally adjoined to Facsimile 1 on the same strip of papyrus, and second, that the symbols from the “Breathing text” are interpreted bit by bit in a writing known as “the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar” in which **the interpretation** turns out to be the same as the text of the English Book of Abraham. . . . No slightest knowledge of Egyptian is necessary to convince anybody that when a symbol as brief as *cat* is “translated” by an involved paragraph of over one hundred words, we are **not** dealing with a “translation” in any accepted sense of the word. . . . the “Alphabet and Grammar” was never given out as an official or inspired document, was never placed before the Church for approval, never discussed for the record, never explained to the world as the facsimiles were. . . . in 1968 priority went to the newly found papyri, which had never been translated and about which many people were understandably curious and impatient. But when it soon became apparent that those documents **did not contain any of the text of the Book of Abraham** as we have it, it was time for the Egyptologists, having done their work and done it well, either to bow out of the scene or to go on to the more important and essential problems of the facsimiles. . . .

It is only the last step that counts, as the French say, and so far nobody has taken it. The hopes for a quick decision with the finding of the Joseph Smith Papyri were **blasted** when it became apparent on the one hand that those documents **do not contain the Book of Abraham**, and on the other that the connection between the so-called Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar and the Book of Abraham is anything but clear. The work has hardly begun, but people still seek the safe and easy solution of authority and ask with impatience, "Can't you spare us all that speculation and surmising and comparing and illustrating and simply give us the results?" The anti-Mormons have been only too glad to do just that, but we must never let them make us forget that proof is a process, not an answer, and that there is no such thing as total knowledge. . . .

**Many Latter-day Saints have not been too happy with the Joseph Smith Papyri**, which instead of giving them all the answers only set them to work on a lot of problems with which none of this generation is prepared to deal. But it was the Mormons who started this game, and it is their responsibility to keep it going. They can never again leave the field **without forfeiting the game**. . . . The bringing forth of the papyrus fragments in 1967 was a reminder to the Saints that they are still expected to do their homework and may claim no special revelation or convenient handout solutions as long as they ignore the vast treasure-house of materials that God has placed within their reach.

So far we have only taken a preliminary view of a few problems raised by Facsimile No. 1, and hardly even mentioned Facsimiles 2 and 3, . . . We have dealt entirely in possibilities, never in certitudes, possibilities being all we need to keep the door open. . . . As long as a single aspect of any problem raised by the Book of Abraham remains unexamined, as long as there is the remotest possibility that any slight detail of any significance may have been overlooked, as long as a single possible relevant text remains unread, we must hold our final word in abeyance. . . .

Who, then, is to decide these weighty matters? That is just the point: Is it necessary to decide here and now? The Mormons have always hesitated and asked for time, waiting (though rarely seeking) for further light and knowledge. Significantly, it has always been the Egyptologists, usually the very soul of caution, who have insisted on a once-for-all, here-and-now, before-we-leave-the-room decision and have been desperately determined not to prolong the discussion. That is still their policy, and it forces us to return upon their own heads the routine question that the world would confound and demolish us: You scholars have spoken; why don't you do the honest thing and admit that you **don't know a blessed thing about the facsimiles**, that you haven't made even a superficial study of them . . . Why not admit that the relationship between the "Alphabet and Grammar" and the Book of Abraham is an enigma, full of odd contradictions and unexplained anomalies? Why not admit that you are not privy to the mind of Joseph Smith? That the test of the Book of Abraham lies in what it says, not in the manner in which it may have been composed, and that a thorough test of its contents would require a scope of research that no scholar today has any intention of undertaking, a scope of knowledge that few if any scholars today possess? . . .

Until now, no one has done much more than play around with the bedizening treasury of the *Pearl of Great Price*. "They" would not, we could not make of the Book of Abraham an object of serious study. The time has come to change all that. (*Improvement Era*, May, 1970, pages 82, 83, 93 and 94)

While the evidence clearly shows that the Book of Abraham is a product of Joseph Smith's imagination, Dr. Nibley would have his people continue to stall and evade the main issue.

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## 8. POSSIBLE SOURCES

Now that Joseph Smith's "Book of Abraham" has been proven false by the very papyrus upon which it was supposed to have been based, Mormon scholars are desperately searching for some way to keep from facing the serious implications of this matter. Although the Book of Abraham is a small book, it has a tremendous influence on Mormon doctrine. Jay M. Todd has stated:

Few writers and historians of the Prophet's life have noted the apparent influence that the Book of Abraham had upon the Prophet. But those who take the time to review his speeches, writings, and thought soon realize that for nine long years—from 1835 to his martyrdom in 1844—the Prophet Joseph Smith relied heavily upon that which he had learned from Abraham. . . . Although the Prophet continued to receive revelations and gain other knowledge, nothing could push aside the great truths he had learned from Abraham. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, page 264)

Because of the importance of the Book of Abraham, to Mormon theology, Mormon writers are going to great lengths to find some way to defend it. Dr. Nibley seems to want us to forget the papyri and judge the Book of Abraham by its similarity to old apocryphal writings. We have previously quoted him as saying:

So it is also with the *Pearl of Great Price*. We are completely **in the dark** as to how it was produced, but we are anything but helpless with the wealth of detailed material it offers us to test it by. . . . it is folly to come out with a verdict about the Book of Abraham until we have studied fully and carefully the great and growing corpus of ancient Abrahamic literature, even if it takes us years to get through it.

For after all, the Book of Abraham itself is a **book of legends**, about Abraham which can only be tested in the light of **other such legends**, which can at least give us hints as to whether Joseph Smith was making it all up or not. . . .

Now the Abraham literature is of course a **great hodge-podge of stuff** coming from many different sources and many different centuries. But because of

the ways in which legends and traditions were swapped around anciently, with very ancient and authentic bits sometimes turning up in the most unlikely places, often buried in **bushels of nonsense**, we cannot escape the obligation of reading everything. . . .

So now it is time to hear the other side of the story, for after all it is just possible that there are things that might be said in favor of the Book of Abraham. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, pages 102, 103 and 105)

Dr. Nibley claims that there are parallels between the *Genesis Apocryphon* and the Book of Abraham:

The discovery of the so-called *Genesis Apocryphon*, among the Dead Sea Scrolls not only confirms the existence of a very ancient non-biblical history of Abraham, but also gives us a peep into its contents, which present really surprising parallels to the Book of Abraham. (*Improvement Era*, January 1969, pages 26-27)

The Mormon writers O. Preston and Christine H. Robinson made the following comment regarding the *Genesis Apocryphon*:

We, of course, are **not** sure that Abraham actually was the author of this ancient scroll. The fact, however, that it is at least a thousand years older than the Biblical account plus the fact, according to the account, that Abraham was instructed in the dream to act as he did, is further concrete evidence of the authenticity of the Abraham story as contained in the *Pearl of Great Price*. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, November 23, 1968)

While scholars feel that the *Genesis Apocryphon* is about 2,000 years old, they do not believe that it was written by Abraham. Instead, they feel that it is a spurious work composed by a Jewish writer about 1,800 years after Abraham's time. The story is based on the book of Genesis, and while it is helpful to scholars who are studying the geography of Palestine or the dialect of Aramaic spoken at the time of Christ, it is of no value as far as understanding the life of Abraham. Millar

Burrows, a noted authority on the Dead Sea Scrolls, made this statement:

In the autumn of 1956 a preliminary publication of the text, . . . was issued by Nahman Avigad and Yigael Yadin under the title *A Genesis Apocryphon*. . . . the text was found to consist of stories from the book of Genesis, retold in Aramaic. Naturally this late version of the stories **adds no authentic** historical information to what is given in Genesis. (*More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls* by Millar Burrows, New York, 1958, pages 7-8)

It would appear that some Mormon writers will appeal to almost any spurious work in their attempt to save the Book of Abraham.

### Imitation Genesis

Besides the devastating evidence against the authenticity of the Book of Abraham that has been furnished by the translation of the original papyrus from which it was supposed to have been taken, there is additional evidence which we should consider. For instance, it is plain to see that Joseph Smith borrowed heavily from the King James Version of the Bible. Below is a comparison of some verses from the Book of Abraham with some verses from Genesis:

GENESIS
<p>Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:</p> <p>And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:</p> <p>And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.</p> <p>So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.</p> <p>And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.</p> <p>And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.</p> <p>And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.</p> <p>And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethael on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord.</p> <p>And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.</p> <p>And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.</p> <p>And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon:</p>

Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.

Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee. (Genesis 12:1-13)

### BOOK OF ABRAHAM

Now the Lord had said unto me: Abraham, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee. . . .

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a blessing. . . .

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee . . . shall all the families of the earth be blessed, . . .

So I, Abraham, departed as the Lord had said unto me, and Lot with me; and I, Abraham, was sixty and two years old when I departed out of Haran.

And I took Sarai, whom I took to wife . . . and Lot, my brother's son, and all our substance that we had gathered, and the souls that we had won in Haran, and came forth in the way to the land of Canaan, . . . to come to the land of Canaan. . . .

And then we passed from Jershon through the land unto the place of Sechem; it was situated in the plains of Moreh, . . . into the borders of the land of the Canaanites, . . .

And the Lord appeared unto me . . . and said unto me; Unto thy seed will I give this land.

And I, Abraham, arose from the place of the altar which I had built unto the Lord, and removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched my tent there, Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east; and there I built another altar unto the Lord, and called again upon name of the Lord.

And I, Abraham, journeyed, going on still towards the south; and there was a continuation of a famine in the land; and I, Abraham concluded to go down into Egypt, to sojourn there, for the famine became very grievous.

And it came to pass when I was come near to enter into Egypt, the Lord said unto me: Behold, Sarai, thy wife, is a very fair woman to look upon;

Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see her, they will say—She is his wife; and they will kill you, but they will save her alive;

. . . say unto them, I pray thee, thou art my sister, that it may be well with me for thy sake, and my soul shall live because of thee. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham 2:3, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19-23 and 25)

These parallels should be sufficient to convince the reader that the two texts are closely related. We feel that the only logical explanation for this relationship is that Joseph Smith merely borrowed from the Bible, rewriting and adding to the text as he went along. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry of Brigham Young University, on the other hand, feels that the Book of Abraham was in existence before Genesis was written and that Genesis was taken from it! Dr. Sperry states:

... the writer believes that the second chapter of Abraham is the **original**, of which Gen. 12:1-13 is an abridgment. This is a remarkable fact ... (*Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, Salt Lake City, 1938, page 81)

On pages 83-84 of the same book, Dr. Sperry states:

For a number of years I have strongly felt that chapter 2 of the Book of Abraham is the original account from which Gen. 12:1-13 was made. Putting it another way, the account in Genesis is nothing more or less than an abridgment of that in the Book of Abraham. ... the writings of Abraham ... must of necessity be older than the original text of Genesis. ...

Let the reader make but a casual comparison of Gen. 12:1-13 and the second chapter of the Book of Abraham and he will discover that an apparently close relationship exists between them. ... The similarity cannot be accidental. ... a linguistic study of the Book of Abraham and of the parallel versions of the Bible points unmistakably to the independent character of the Egyptian record and to the conclusion that it is, at least, the possible original from whence the account in Genesis was taken.

Although Dr. Sperry's idea that Genesis was taken from the Book of Abraham may seem fantastic, it is the only answer he could give that would not undermine the Book of Abraham. To say that the Book of Abraham came from Genesis is to label it a fraud. Of course, now that we have the original papyrus from which the Book of Abraham was "translated," we know that it is in reality nothing but an Egyptian funerary document and has nothing to do with Abraham or his religion. But even if the original papyrus were not available, there would be sufficient evidence to prove that the Book of Abraham was written after Genesis.

While Dr. Sperry would like us to believe that Genesis was derived from the Book of Abraham, he points out that there are differences between the two texts. He states that the Book of Abraham calls the patriarch "Abraham," whereas Genesis refers to him as "Abram" until the seventeenth chapter. After comparing Gen. 12:4 and Abr. 2:14, Dr. Sperry states:

Three things are immediately apparent. In the first place the account in the Book of Abraham is written in the first person, that of Genesis in the third person. Secondly, the accounts do not agree as to the age of Abraham when he left Haran. Thirdly, the Book of Abraham writes the name of the great patriarch "Abraham" as against "Abram" in the Genesis version. It is self-evident that the Book of Abraham does not copy verbatim, if at all, from the King James version as some of its critics may presume. Had Joseph Smith been an impostor the chances are very good that he would have made Abraham's age agree with that given in Genesis. Furthermore, it is doubtful that he would have called the patriarch "Abraham" before the latter came to Egypt. The version in Genesis does not call him "Abraham" until he had long been back from that country. (See Gen. 17:5). (*Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, page 84)

Actually, Dr. Sperry's point concerning "Abram" and "Abraham" becomes of little value when we compare the original handwritten manuscripts and the first printed version of the Book of Abraham with the way it is printed today. The manuscripts and the first printed version in the *Times and Seasons* show that Joseph Smith was very confused over the name and used both versions. Abraham 2:14 contains the name "Abraham" in modern editions, but the first printed version reads "Abram" just like the King James Version of the Bible. Below is a comparison showing the text as it appears in the Bible, the text as Joseph Smith first printed it in the *Times and Seasons*, and the altered version that appears in modern editions of the *Pearl of Great Price*.

GENESIS
So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. (Genesis 12:4)
TIMES AND SEASONS
So I, Abram, departed as the Lord had said unto me, and Lot with me, and I, Abram was sixty and two years old when I departed out of Haran. ( <i>Times and Seasons</i> , Vol. 3, page 706)
MODERN EDITIONS
So I, Abraham departed as the Lord had said unto me, and Lot with me, and I, Abraham, was sixty and two years old when I departed out of Haran. ( <i>Pearl of Great Price</i> , Abr. 2:14)

Dr. James R. Clark admits that the text of the Book of Abraham has been changed regarding this matter:

From the *Times and Seasons* printing of the translation it would seem that Abraham used the earlier form of his name—Abram—when he referred in his autobiography to events in his life preceeding his offering of the sacrifice on the altar at Sechem or at Jershon. ... The two manuscripts of the Prophet's translations also preserve this distinction just as it was printed by the translator, Joseph Smith, in the *Times and Seasons* noted above ...

Our present text of the Book of Abraham loses this significance of the difference in the meanings of the two forms of Abraham's name by printing the name in one form only. This change in the text evidently came in England when Parley P. Pratt or Thomas Ward republished the Book of Abraham in the July and August, 1842 issues of the *Millennial Star*. ...

It is the personal opinion of the author that for the very substantial reasons presented above, the *Times and Seasons* contains the correct translations or transliterations of the names for Abraham and that our present editions are in error on this point. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, by James R. Clark, Salt Lake City, 1962, pages 176 and 178)

The story of the wicked priest attempting to sacrifice Abraham upon the altar was probably suggested by Abraham offering his son for a sacrifice (see Genesis



22:1-14). In both cases the Lord intervened just before the sacrifice could be performed. Facsimile No. 1 is supposed to show the “idolatrous priest of Elkenah” with a knife in his hand “attempting to offer up Abraham as a sacrifice.” Below is a comparison of the two stories.

GENESIS
And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: . . . (Genesis 22:10-11)
BOOK OF ABRAHAM
And as they lifted up their hands upon me, that they might offer me up and take away my life, . . . . . . and the angel of his presence stood by me, . . . his voice was unto me: Abraham, Abraham, . . . (Book of Abraham 1:15-16)

It is extremely interesting to note that the text of the Book of Abraham itself seems to catch Joseph Smith in the process of changing his doctrine concerning the Godhead. In the first part of the Book of Abraham we do not find the doctrine of a plurality of Gods. For instance, in Abraham 2:1 we read: “Now the **Lord God** caused the famine to wax sore . . .” This part of the Book of Abraham was probably written in 1835. The Mormon writer Jay M. Todd states: “Another fact of relevance in the matter is the amount of present-day Book of Abraham in the hand of Warren Parrish: chapter 1:1-2:18. This is also the exact length of the first installment in the 1842 *Times and Seasons*. One tends to wonder if that is as far as the Prophet reached in his 1835 work” (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, by Jay M. Todd, page 324). In 1842, however, Joseph Smith “translated” more of the Book of Abraham. Under the date of March 8, 1842, we find this statement in his history: “Recommended translating from the Records of Abraham for the tenth number of the *Times and Seasons*, . . .” Jay M. Todd makes this remark concerning the entry in Joseph Smith’s *History*: “This is a very important entry, the first entry since November 1835 in which the Prophet is mentioned as ‘translating.’ Interestingly, it is after the publication of the first installment, which was up to Abraham 2:18” (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, page 228). As we examine the text of the Book of Abraham we find that it is the part which was “translated in March, 1842, which contains the doctrine of a plurality of Gods. The words “the Gods” appear more than forty times in the fourth and fifth chapters of the Book of Abraham.

Actually, chapters four and five of the Book of Abraham appear to be nothing but the first part of Genesis rewritten to include a plurality of Gods. The word “God” is changed to “the Gods,” and wherever the

word “he” refers to God it has been changed to “they.” It would appear, however, that in one instance Joseph Smith forgot to change the word “he” to “they” and that it had to be changed after his death. He was apparently copying from Genesis 1:16, which reads:

And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; **he** made the stars also. (Genesis 1:16)

Joseph Smith rewrote this to read as follows:

And the Gods organized the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; with the lesser light **he** set the stars, also; . . . (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 3, page 721)

This was reprinted the same way in the *Millennial Star*, August 1842, Vol. 3, page 51. In the *Pearl of Great Price* it has been changed to read:

And the Gods organized the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; with the lesser light **they** set the stars also; (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham 4:16)

## Other Sources

Although the King James Version of the Bible was the primary source for Joseph Smith’s Book of Abraham, he seems to have used other sources as well. It is very possible that the writings of the Jewish historian Josephus had some influence on the Book of Abraham. In Abraham 1:23 we read of “the daughter of **Egyptus**. . . This name is not found in the Bible, but in “Flavius Josephus Against Apion,” we read: “. . . Manetho says that Sethosis himself was called **Egyptus**, . . . (*Josephus*, translated by William Whiston, Michigan, 1966, page 612).

According to the Book of Abraham, the Lord revealed the principles of astronomy to Abraham before he went into Egypt. In Abraham 3:15 we read: “And the Lord said unto me: Abraham, I show these things unto thee before ye go into Egypt, that ye may declare all these words.” At the bottom of the explanation to Facsimile No. 3 in the Book of Abraham we find this statement: “Abraham is reasoning upon the principles of **astronomy**, in the king’s court.” While the Bible does not even use the word “astronomy,” Josephus claimed that Abraham taught the Egyptians “the science of **astronomy**”:

. . . Abram conferred with each of them, . . . He communicated to them arithmetic, and delivered to them the science of **astronomy**; for, before Abram came into Egypt, they were unacquainted with those parts of learning; . . . (*Josephus*, page 33)

The Mormon leaders must have been familiar with Josephus at the time the Book of Abraham was written,

for in a letter, dated December 22, 1835, Oliver Cowdery stated: “. . . Josephus says that the descendants of Seth were virtuous, and possessed a great knowledge of the heavenly bodies, . . .” (*Latter Day Saints’ Messenger and Advocate*, Vol. 2, page 236).

Another book which probably had an influence on Joseph Smith’s “Book of Abraham” was Thomas Dick’s *Philosophy of a Future State*. Fawn M. Brodie makes these comments concerning Joseph Smith’s use of this book:

Dick’s elucidation of the thesis that matter is eternal and indestructible Joseph had found convincing, and he had logically concluded that God must have made the heavens and the earth out of materials He had on hand.

Dick’s whole work made a lasting impression on Joseph, whose open-mindedness, stemming no doubt from the insubstantial character of his religious credo, was unique among ministers of the gospel. This book was his first introduction to the mathematics of the heavens—the millions of stars, the immeasurable distances—and he had to come to grips with the infinitude of the universe in his own consciousness. The facts of astronomy must somehow be welded to his own special structure of Jewish and Christian mysticism. . . .

His solution was the Book of Abraham. . . . Joseph created Abraham an eminent astronomer who penetrates all the mysteries of the universe. Abraham relates that there is one star, Kolob, lying near the throne of God, . . . Kolob and countless lesser stars are peopled by spirits that are eternal as matter itself. These spirits are not cast in the same mold, but differ among themselves in quality of intelligence as the stars differ in magnitude.

These concepts, which developed peculiar ramifications in Joseph’s later teachings, came directly from Dick, who had speculated that the stars were peopled by “various orders of intelligences,” and that these intelligences were “progressive beings” in various stages of evolution toward perfection. (*No Man Knows My History*, by Fawn M. Brodie, pages 171-172)

Mrs. Brodie also points out that the Mormon publication, *Messenger and Advocate*, “quoted openly from Dick” in an issue published in 1836. Actually, a number of pages of the *Messenger and Advocate*, Vol. 3, are devoted to quotations from Thomas Dick’s book (see pages 423, 424, 425, 461, 462, 463, 468 and 469).

Although we have only had access to an 1849 printing of Dick’s book, it seems to agree with Mrs. Brodie’s quotations from the 1830 printing. Below is a comparison of Dick’s idea of astronomy compared with the teachings found in the Book of Abraham.

Mormon apologists have tried to make it appear that the teachings on astronomy found in the Book of Abraham were ahead of Joseph Smith’s time. In the *Commentary on the Pearl of Great Price*, by George Reynolds and James M. Sjdahl, we find the following statements:

When Joseph Smith enunciated the sublime truths above noted no such thoughts were prevalent amongst the students of astronomy. . . . It was not until the Book of Abraham had been published in America and in England also that Sir Wm. G. Hamilton of the University of Dublin advanced the idea that our solar system had a center around which the sun and all its attendant planets moved. . . . Mr. Wm. Petrie of London, writing with regard to this same star, says: “Alcyone, a primeval name of the star, means the center, and has quite recently been discovered to be really the center around which even our whole solar system, amongst others, revolves.”

Short as is this last quotation, it testifies to three things confirmatory of the divine inspiration that gave to the world the Book of Abraham.

(1st) That this solar system has a central or governing sun or planet.

(2nd) That this fact was known to the ancients, who gave to this particular star the name of the center.

(3rd) That in modern times this truth was only recently discovered. That is to say: Joseph Smith could not have learned it from living men or modern books, but only through the revelations of God. (*Commentary on the Pearl of Great Price*, pages 266-268)

Actually, the teachings of the Book of Abraham do not seem to have been any more advanced than the ideas of Thomas Dick. The Mormon astronomer R. Grant Athay admits that some of the concepts contained in the Book of Abraham are somewhat confusing:

Much of what is recorded in the Book of Abraham pertaining to astronomy is difficult to place in modern perspective. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1968, page 257)

BOOK OF ABRAHAM	DICK’S WORK
<p>And I saw the stars, that they were very great, and that one of them was nearest unto the throne of God; and there were many great ones which were near unto it;</p> <p>And the Lord said unto me: These are the governing ones; and the name of the great one is Kolob, because it is near unto me, for I am the Lord thy God: I have set this one to govern all those which belong to the same order as that upon which thou standest. . . . Kolob is set nigh unto the throne of God, to govern all those planets which belong to the same order as that upon which thou standest. (Book of Abraham 3:2, 3 and 9)</p>	<p>. . . that portion of the universe which lies within reach of our assisted vision, comprehends within its capacious sphere, at least two thousand four hundred millions of worlds. . . . it is highly probable, . . . that there is a graduation of intellect, and beings of different orders among the inhabitants of these worlds . . . (<i>Philosophy of a Future State</i>, 1849 ed., page 217)</p> <p>It is now considered by astronomers, as highly probable, if not certain, from late observations, . . . that all the systems of the universe revolve round one common centre, . . . such a central body would be five hundred times larger than all the systems and worlds in the universe. . . . If this is in reality the case, it may, with the most emphatic propriety, be termed, <i>The Thone of God</i>. (Ibid., page 224)</p>

Those parts of the Book of Abraham that discuss set periods of time for the sun, moon, and planets do not invoke a strong interest from astronomers. Similarly, the control supposedly exerted by Kolob over the earth and the sun is not stated explicitly enough to have physical meaning. . . .

The legend accompanying Facsimile No. 1 in the Book of Abraham states that the sun borrows its energy from Kolob. As an astronomer, I do **not understand** what meaning this might have. The sun generates its own energy from nuclear fusion deep in its interior. The processes are known and understood. The sun has no apparent need to borrow energy from another star, and science knows of no process by which such energy can be borrowed.

The sun does, however, owe its origin and its nuclear fuel to an earlier generation of stars, to a mother cloud of stellar matter. Perhaps this is what is meant by the Egyptians. It seems more likely, however, that they simply had no basis for understanding nuclear energy and therefore could not describe it. (Ibid., pages 264-265)

The Mormon writer Milton R. Hunter states that “Kolob” has not been located:

However, astronomers have not, in our age, discovered one separate and distinctive body of matter which serves as the center of our galaxy and which seems to govern all the stars in said galaxy. In other words, they have not located a star which could be definitely designated as being Kolob. (*Pearl of Great Price Commentary*, by Milton R. Hunter, 1964 ed., page 92)

The word “intelligences” appears a number of times in Thomas Dick’s book, and this seems to be reflected in the Book of Abraham. Below is a comparison of quotes from Dick’s work with quotes from the Book of Abraham:

BOOK OF ABRAHAM
<p>And the Lord said unto me: these two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they; I am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all.</p> <p>. . . I came down in the beginning in the midst of all the <b>intelligences</b> thou hast seen.</p> <p>Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the <b>intelligences</b> that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones; (Book of Abraham 3:19-22)</p>
DICK’S WORK
<p>. . . unnumbered <b>intelligences</b> (<i>The Philosophy of a Future State</i>, page 60)</p> <p>His glory . . . can be traced only in the external manifestation which he gives of himself in the material creation which his power has brought into existence—in the various orders of <b>intelligences</b> with which he has peopled it—and in his moral dispensations towards all worlds and beings which now exist, . . . (Ibid., page 188)</p> <p>The gradations of intellect, or the various orders of <b>intelligences</b> which may people the universal system. (Ibid., page 196)</p>

One of the most offensive doctrines contained in the Book of Abraham is that concerning the Negro. The Book of Abraham teaches that all the descendants of Ham—i.e., the Negroes—were cursed so that they could not hold the priesthood. This curse included the Egyptians, for Joseph Smith taught that they were also the descendants of Ham. In trying to support this doctrine Mormon apologists have appealed to the Bible. The Bible, however, says nothing about Negroes being denied the priesthood or being cursed with a dark skin. Joseph Smith’s doctrine of the curse on the Negro was obviously derived from the thinking of his time. One of the books which may have influenced Joseph Smith on this subject was Josiah Priest’s *American Antiquities*. In this book we find the following statements:

The word *Ham* which was the name of the second son of Noah, is the word which was descriptive of the color which is *black*, or burnt. . . . Accordingly, as best suited to the *complexion* of the descendants of *Ham*, the hot regions of the equator were allotted to those nations.

To the Cushites, the southern climes of Asia, along the coast of the Persian gulf, Susiane, or Cushistan, Arabia, Canaan, Palestine, Syria, Egypt and Lybia in Africa. These countries were settled by the posterity of Ham, who were, and now are, of a glossy black. . . .

But at the birth of Ham, it was different. When this child was born, we may suppose the house or tent to have been in an uproar, on the account of his strange complexion; the news of which, we suppose, soon reached the ear of the father, who, on beholding it, at once, in the form of an exclamation, cried out HAM! that is, it is *black*! and this word became his name. . . . At two particular times, it appears from Genesis, that Noah declared, Ham, with his posterity, should serve or become servants to both the posterity of Shem and Japheth. . . . the African race are the people. But how is this proved, unless we allow them to be the descendants of Ham?

If, then, they are his descendants, they have been such in every age, from the very beginning; and the same criterion, which is their **color**, has distinguished them. This proves their progenitor, Ham, to have been **black**; . . . (*American Antiquities*, Albany, 1835, pages 18,19, 22 and 23)

Joseph Smith was certainly familiar with Priest’s *American Antiquities*, for he quoted from it in the *Times and Seasons*, Vol. 3, pages 813-814.

James R. Harris, Assistant Professor of Religious Education at Brigham Young University, may have uncovered another source for some of the text of the Book of Abraham, although he does not seem to realize the serious implications of this important discovery. Mr. Harris has found that part of Abraham 1:2 seems to have a definite relationship to some material written by Oliver Cowdery. Cowdery, of course, was one of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon.

Below the reader will find a comparison of Oliver Cowdery's words with those found in the Book of Abraham.

BOOK OF ABRAHAM
... I <b>sought for the blessings of the fathers</b> , and the right whereunto I should be ordained <b>to administer the same</b> ; having been myself a <b>follower of righteousness</b> , desiring also to be one who <b>possessed great knowledge</b> , ... ( <i>Pearl of Great Price</i> , Book of Abraham 1:2)
OLIVER COWDERY
... we diligently <b>sought for the right of the fathers</b> , and the authority of the holy priesthood, and the power <b>to administer in the same</b> ; for we desired to be <b>followers of righteousness</b> and the <b>possessors of greater knowledge</b> , ... ("Patriarchal Blessing Book," no. 1, pages 8-9, as cited by Richard L. Anderson in the <i>Improvement Era</i> , September 1968, page 20)

James R. Harris makes these surprising comments concerning this matter:

A possibility that the text of the Book of Abraham may have been **defective**, and therefore both **inadequate** and **unnecessary** to the production of a revealed translation is explored and proposed by Todd (pages 289, 325).

We may have observed additional support for this theory about a month before Todd went to press. The second article in a series on The Three Witnesses was published by Richard L. Anderson. In a quote from a patriarchal blessing recorded in 1833, December 13, (Patriarchal Blessing Book, no. 1, pages 8-9). Oliver Cowdery (recorder) added this comment: ...

Comparing this quote with Abraham 1:2 would support the theory that a papyrus text in the hands of the prophet was not essential to production of the translation: ...

The **near identical wording** of these passages would indicate that some of the text of the Book of Abraham was revealed and recorded before the Abraham papyri came into the possession of Joseph Smith. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Autumn 1969, pages 126-127)

From these comments it would appear that James R. Harris is willing to accept the idea that the Book of Abraham did not come from the papyrus. He would apparently have us believe that at least some of the text of the Book of Abraham was revealed to Joseph Smith before December 13, 1833, and that Oliver Cowdery borrowed his statements from there. While this would explain the "near identical wording," it is not facing the reality of Joseph Smith's statements that the Book of Abraham came from the papyrus. A much more logical explanation is that Joseph Smith's Book of Abraham is a work of his own imagination, and that he derived his ideas from Oliver Cowdery and several other sources.

There seems to be some question as to when Cowdery's statement was actually written. One scholar

maintains that the blessings "that were given December 18, 1833, were not recorded until the latter part of September 1835 and early part of October 1835," which would be after Joseph Smith obtained the papyri. Joseph Fielding Smith also gives the year as 1835: "We also have Oliver's testimony, recorded by his own hand, as early as the year 1835. The account is quite interesting, and was recorded in the patriarchal blessing book of Patriarch Joseph Smith, Sen., by Oliver, ..." (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, page 99).

The Mormon scholar Richard L. Anderson, however, maintains that the "entry originated December 13, 1833; ..." (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, page 24, footnote 16). Perhaps Dr. Anderson means that the entry was originally written in 1833 but not copied into the Patriarchal Blessing Book until 1835.

However this may be, it is very likely that Joseph Smith read Oliver Cowdery's statement before he dictated the handwritten manuscript of the Book of Abraham.

In an article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1969, page 93, Lester Bush states that "the parallels between Mormon Scripture and the contemporary proslavery arguments are striking." He goes on to point out that even before Joseph Smith received the papyri, W. W. Phelps had published an article which contained ideas similar to the Book of Abraham. This article was published in the *Messenger and Advocate* in March, 1835, and contained these interesting statements:

Is or is it not apparent from reason and analogy as drawn from a careful reading of the Scriptures, that God causes the saints, or people that fall away from his church to be **cursed** in time, with a **black skin**? Was or was not Cain, being marked, obliged to inherit **the curse**, he and his children, forever? And if so, as **Ham**, like other sons of God might break the rule of God, by marrying out of the church, did or did he not, have a **Canaanite wife**, whereby some of the **black seed** was **preserved** through the flood, and his son, Canaan, after he laughed at his grandfather's nakedness, heired three **curses**; one from Cain for killing Abel; one from Ham for marrying a **black wife**, and one from Noah for ridiculing what God had respect for? Are or are not the Indians a sample of marking with blackness for rebellion against God's holy word and holy order? And can or can we not observe in the countenances of almost all nations, except the Gentile, a dark, sallow hue, which tells the sons of God, without a line of history, that they have fallen or changed from the original beauty and grace of father Adam? (*Messenger and Advocate*, Vol. 1, page 82)

In his "Book of Abraham," Joseph Smith seemed to follow the same argument used by Phelps—i.e., that Ham married a Canaanite woman and thus "the curse" was preserved in the land:

Now this king of Egypt was a descendant from the loins of **Ham**, and was a partaker of the blood of the **Canaanites** by birth.

From this descent sprang all the Egyptians, and thus the blood of the **Canaanites was preserved** in the land.

The land of Egypt being first discovered by a woman, who was the daughter of Ham, and the daughter of Egyptus, which in the Chaldean signifies Egypt, which signifies that which is forbidden.

When this woman discovered the land it was under water, who afterward settled her sons in it, and thus, from

**Ham**, sprang that race which **preserved the curse** in the land. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, 1:21-24)

That Joseph Smith may have borrowed ideas from W. W. Phelps or Oliver Cowdery is not too surprising, for both these men were good writers and worked with him on the papyri (see *History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 236).

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## 9. ORIGIN OF INDIANS

The fact that Joseph Smith had a great interest concerning the ancient inhabitants of the land, prior to the “translation” of the Book of Mormon, is no secret to those who have read the *History of Joseph Smith by his Mother*, Lacy Mack Smith. She stated:

I presume our family presented an aspect as singular as any that ever lived upon the face of the earth—all seated in a circle, father, mother, sons and daughters, and giving the most profound attention to a boy, eighteen years of age, . . .

During our evening conversations, **Joseph** would occasionally give us some of the most amusing recitals that could be imagined. He would describe the **ancient inhabitants** of this continent, their dress, mode of traveling, and the animals upon which they rode; their cities, their buildings, with every particular; their mode of warfare; and also their religious worship. This he would do with **ease**, seemingly, as if he had spent his whole life among them. (*History of Joseph Smith*, by Lacy Mack Smith, 1954 edition, pages 82-83)

It is not surprising that Joseph Smith would take an interest in the ancient inhabitants of this continent, for many people were discussing the question at that time. We find this statement in the *Palmyra Herald* for October 30, 1822:

In the year 1810, I opened,—with several other persons who accompanied me for the purpose, one of the flat mounds, common in the western country. . . . This was . . . in Ohio. . . . In this mound we found the skeletons of a number of bodies, some of a very large size,—they were all deposits directly due east and west, the heads to the west; precisely as is the practice in **Christian** burials.

The *Palmyra Register* for May 26, 1819, contained this information:

We have seen an article in the *Cleveland Register*, which stated that a mound of considerable dimensions . . . had been opened, and a number of silver broaches found . . . the mound was a depository of the dead . . .

of great antiquity . . . From these and many other similar discoveries, the writer believes (and we think with good reason) that this country was once inhabited by a race of people, at least, partially civilized, & that this race has been exterminated by the forefathers of the present and late tribes of Indians in this country.

The *Wayne Sentinel*, published in Palmyra, contained these statements on July 24, 1929:

The Aborigines.—The feeble and scattered fragments of the once powerful Indian Tribes who were formerly the lordly proprietors of the whole territory which now constitutes our flourishing and populous country, are fast dwindling away, and will soon be buried in the depths of that oblivion which conceals the history and fate of a people who (judging from the traces discovered of the progress which they had made in civilization, and the arts and sciences, as developed by the western antiquities) must have been but a little behind the present generation in many respects. When we look at the stragglers Indians who . . . reveal the ravages of intemperance and almost every other loathsome vice, we can hardly persuade ourselves that they are remnants of the powerful race of people who, as it were but yesterday, stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific . . . we may picture them in our minds as a flourishing and mighty nation . . . powerful in wealth and natural resources; combining moral and political excellence . . . and we may suppose that some dreadful plague, some national calamity swept them from the face of the earth; or perhaps that like Sodom and Gomorrah of old, their national sins became so heinous, that the Almighty in his wrath utterly annihilated them . . .

It is interesting to note that the Book of Mormon states that the Nephites were a civilized people who were destroyed by the Lamanites—a wicked people—for their sins. For another important statement concerning the ancient inhabitants, which was published in the *Palmyra Herald*, February 19, 1823, (see our *Case*, Vol. 2, page 69).

During, and even before, Joseph Smith’s time it was believed by many people that the Indians were the Lost



Ten Tribes of Israel. Although the Book of Mormon does not claim that the Indians are the Lost Ten Tribes, it does claim that they are descendants of Joseph, thus making them Israelites. Because of this similarity anti-Mormon writers have suggested that Joseph Smith borrowed his idea concerning the origin of the Indians from the thinking of his time. Several books had been published prior to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon which contained the idea that the Indians were of Israelite origin. The Bureau of American Ethnology printed the following statement concerning this matter in 1907:

Father Duran in 1585 was one of the first to state explicitly that "these natives are of the ten tribes of Israel" . . . Antonio de Montezinos, . . . while journeying in South America in 1641 claimed that he met savages who followed Jewish practices. This story he repeated in Holland, in 1644, to Manasseh ben Israel, who printed it in his work, *Hope of Israel*. From it Thomas Thorowgood, in 1652, published *Digitus Dei*, in which he sought to prove that the Indians were the Jews "lost in the world for the space of near 2,000 years." From this work many subsequent writers obtained their chief arguments. . . . The identification of the American aborigines with the "lost ten tribes" was based on alleged identities in religions, practices, customs and habits, traditions, and languages. Adair's *History of the American Indians*, published in 1775, was based on this theory. . . . (*Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, Vol. 1, Bulletin 30, page 775, as photographically reproduced in *Mormon Claims Examined*, by Larry S. Jonas, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1961, page 20)

In 1816, at Trenton, New Jersey, Elias Boudinot published a book entitled, *A Star in the West; or, a Humble Attempt to Discover the Long Lost Tribes of Israel, Preparatory to Their Return to Their Beloved City, Jerusalem*. On pages 279-280 of this book we find the following statement:

What could possibly bring greater declarative glory to God, or tend more essentially to affect and rouse the nations of the earth, . . . and thus, call their attention to the truth of divine revelation, than a full discovery, that these wandering nations of Indians are the long lost tribes of Israel; . . .

The following was published in the *Wayne Sentinel* (the paper to which the family of Joseph Smith apparently subscribed), October 11, 1825:

Those who are most conversant with the public and private economy of the Indians, are strongly of opinion that they are the lineal descendants of the Israelites, and my own researches go far to confirm me in the same belief. (*Wayne Sentinel*, October 11, 1825, as photographically reprinted in *Mormon Claims Examined*, page 45)

One of the most interesting books on this subject which was published prior to the Book of Mormon was Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews*. The first edition was printed in 1823; it was soon sold out and an enlarged edition appeared in 1825.

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts evidently read the *View of the Hebrews* and became concerned because of the many parallels between it and the Book of Mormon. He prepared a manuscript in which these parallels are listed. Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the Brigham Young University, stated:

But the most publicized list of parallels of the Book of Mormon and another work is B. H. Robert's comparison of that book with Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews*. Commenting on this, Mrs. Brodie wrote: "The scholarly Mormon historian, B. H. Roberts once made a careful and impressive list of parallels between the *View of the Hebrews* and the Book of Mormon, but for obvious reasons it was never published." (*Improvement Era*, October 1959, page 744)

In a letter to Ariel L. Crowley, Ben E. Roberts (B. H. Roberts' son) admitted that his father had prepared a manuscript dealing with the *View of the Hebrews* and the Book of Mormon:

I hasten to correct any impression that you may have in regard to Father's manuscript dealing with the Book of Mormon and Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews*.

During the last years of his life, he had been working on an outline of comparison. This work was never finished, and of course, was not in shape for publication. You may rest assured, however, that he found nothing in his study which reflected upon the integrity of Joseph Smith's account of the Book of Mormon. (Letter by Ben E. Roberts, printed in *About the Book of Mormon*, by Ariel L. Crowley, page 132)

Mimeographed copies of B. H. Roberts' list of parallels were "privately distributed among a restricted group of Mormon scholars," and in January, 1956, Mervin B. Hogan had them published in *The Rocky Mountain Mason*. Although Ben E. Roberts claims that his father's manuscript does not cast doubt upon the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon, a careful reading of it would seem to indicate that B. H. Roberts had lost faith in the Book of Mormon. Sterling M. McMurrin stated that Roberts' "study of Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews* and the Book of Mormon attests his determination to keep the case for Mormonism open and honest" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1967, page 144). Davis Bitton states that B. H. Roberts wrote the parallels "towards the end of his life." Mr. Bitton also states: "This document, which has been known about for many years, is published by at least one group as a means of embarrassing the Church" (*Ibid.*, page 122).

However this may be, Roberts' parallels were certainly not written as a faith promoting work. Notice some of the comments made by B. H. Roberts:

Query: Could all this have supplied structural work for the Book of Mormon? (*The Rocky Mountain Mason*, January 1956, page 20)

Was this sufficient to suggest the strange manner of writing the book of Mormon in the learning of the Jews, and the language of the Egyptian? (*Ibid.*, page 22)

Query: Would this treatise of the destruction of Jerusalem suggest the theme to the Book of Mormon author, is the legitimate query, since the *View of the Hebrews*, was published seven to five years before the Book of Mormon. (Ibid., pages 24-25)

Query: Did the author of the Book of Mormon follow too closely the course of Ethan Smith in this use of Isaiah, would be a legitimate query. The *View of the Hebrews* was published seven to five years before the Book of Mormon. (Ibid., page 25)

B. H. Roberts lists 18 parallels between *View of the Hebrews* and the Book of Mormon. In Parallel No. 4 Roberts states:

(4) Origin of American Indians: It is often represented by Mormon speakers and writers, that the Book of Mormon was the first to represent the American Indians as the descendants of the Hebrews; holding that the Book of Mormon is unique in this. The claim is sometimes still ignorantly made. (*The Rocky Mountain Mason*, January 1956, page 18)

Roberts goes on to point out that the idea the Indians were originally Hebrews was popular even before 1830:

... In his index to the *View of the Hebrews* (Second Edition) (p. lx) Ethan Smith informs us that from page 114 to page 225 (111 pages) will be devoted to “promiscuous testimonies,” to the main fact for which his book stands, viz., the Hebrew origin of the American Indians. He brings together a very long list of writers and published books to show that this view very generally obtained throughout New England. One hundred and eleven pages devoted to evidence alone of the fact of such Hebrew origin gives space for much proof. Referring to Adair’s testimonies on the subject, the *View of the Hebrews* list twenty-three arguments to prove such origin (pp. 147-8). (Ibid., pages 18-19)

In parallel No. 5 B. H. Roberts points out that the idea of the Indians having a lost book may have been suggested by Ethan Smith’s book:

(5) The Lost Book: “Dr. West of Stockbridge gave the following information. An old Indian informed him that his fathers in this country had not long since had a book which they had for a longtime preserved. But having lost the knowledge of reading it, they concluded it would be of no further use to them; and they buried it with an Indian chief.” It was spoken of “as a matter of fact.” (*View of the Hebrews*, Second Edition, p. 223).

“Some readers have said: If the Indians are of the tribes of Israel, some decisive evidence of the fact will ere long be exhibited. This may be the case. ... Would evidence like the following be deemed as verging toward what would be satisfactory? Suppose a leading character in Israel—wherever they are—should be found to have in his possession some biblical fragment, of ancient Hebrew writing. This man dies, and it is buried with him in such a manner as to be long preserved. Some people afterward removing that earth, discover this fragment, and ascertain what it is,—an article of ancient Israel. Would such an incident ... be esteemed of some weight? Something like this may possibly have occurred in favour of our Indians being of Israel.” (p. 217)

Finding the Pittsfield Parchment (Hebrew): “Mr. Merrick gave the following account: That in 1815, he was levelling some ground under and near an old woodshed standing on a place of his, situated on Indian Hill (a place in Pittsfield so called, and lying, as the writer was afterwards informed, at some distance from the middle of the town where Mr. Merrick is now living.) He ploughed and conveyed away old chips and earth. ... After the work was done, he discovered, near where the earth had been dug the deepest, a kind of black strap, about six inches in length. ... He found it was formed of pieces of thick raw hide ... and in the fold it contained four folded leaves of old parchment. These leaves were of a dark yellow (suggesting gold color?) and contained some kind of writing. (They turned out to be Bible quotations.) They were written in Hebrew with a pen, in plain and intelligible writing.” (pp. 219-220.) Query: Could all this have supplied structural work for the Book of Mormon? (Ibid., pages 19-20)

In parallel No. 9, B. H. Roberts points out that the Book of Mormon claims the descendants of Lehi became divided into two groups. There was a “civilized branch” who were called Nephites and a wicked people called Lamanites. The Lamanites were “an idle people, full of mischief and subtlety, and did seek in the wilderness for beasts of prey” (2 Nephi 5:24). The Nephites and Lamanites fought many wars, until finally the Nephites—the civilized people—were annihilated. Roberts’ parallel No. 9 seems to show that Ethan Smith had suggested such an idea some years before the Book of Mormon was published:

(9) Accounting for an Overthrown Civilization in America as Witnessed by the Ruined Monuments of It; and the Existence of Barbarous Peoples Occupying America at the Advent of the Europeans:

Two classes, barbarous and civilized were found.

Ethan Smith found opposition to his views growing out of the supposition that if the American Indians were descendants of the lost tribes of Israel, then they would have been a civilized rather than a barbarous people when discovered. Of this he says:

“Some have felt a difficulty arising against the Indians being the ten tribes, from their ignorance of the mechanic arts, of writing, and of navigation. Ancient Israel knew something of these; and some imagine that these arts being once known, could never be lost. But no objection is hence furnished against our scheme. The knowledge of mechanic arts possessed in early times has been lost by many nations ... And Israel in an outcast state, might as well have lost it. It seems a fact that Israel have lost it, let them be who or where they may. Otherwise, they must have been known in the civilized world.

“But that the people who first migrated to this western world did possess some knowledge of the mechanic arts (as much doubtless, as was possessed by Israel when they disappeared in the east) appears from incontestible facts, which are furnished in Baron Humboldt, and in American Archaeology, such as the finding of brick, earthen ware, sculptures, some implements of iron, as well as other metals, and other tokens of considerable improvement; which furnish an argument in favour of the Indians having descended from the ten tribes. ...

“The probability then is this; that the ten tribes arriving in this continent with some knowledge of the arts of civilized life; finding themselves in a vast wilderness filled with the best of game, inviting them to the chase; most of them fell into a wandering idle hunt-life. Different clans parted from each other, lost each other, and formed separate tribes. Most of them formed a habit of this idle mode of living and were pleased with it. More sensible parts of this people associated together, to improve their knowledge of the arts; and probably continued thus for ages. From these the noted relics of civilization discovered in the west and south were furnished. But the savage tribes prevailed; and in process of time their savage jealousies and rage annihilated their more civilized brethren. And thus, as a wholly vindictive Providence would have it, and according to ancient denunciations, all were left in an ‘outcast’ savage state. This accounts for their loss of the knowledge of letters, of the art of navigation, and of the use of iron. And such a loss can no more operate against their being of the ten tribes, than against their being of any other origin. . . .

“It is highly probable that the more civilized part of the tribes of Israel, after they settled in America, became wholly separated from the hunting and savage tribes of their brethren; that the latter lost the knowledge of their having descended from the same family with themselves; that the more civilized part continued for many centuries; that tremendous wars were frequent between them and their savage brethren, till the former became extinct.

“This hypothesis accounts for the ancient works, forts, mounds, and vast enclosures, as well as tokens of a good degree of civil government, which are manifestly very ancient, and from centuries before Columbus discovered America. . . .

“These partially civilized people became extinct. What account can be given of this, but that the savages extirpated them, after long and dismal wars? And nothing appears more probable than that they were the better part of the Israelites who came from this continent, who for a long time retained their knowledge of the mechanic and civil arts; while the greater part of their brethren became savage and wild. . . .”

Then he adds this in conclusion of the theme:

“But however vindictive the savages must have been;—however cruel and horrid in extirpating their more civilized brethren; yet it is a fact that there are many excellent traits in their original character.” (pp. 171-174.)

Query: Let it be remembered that the work from which this is quoted existed from five to seven years before the publication of the Book of Mormon, and the two editions of the work flooded the New England states and New York. (Ibid., pages 22-24)

We cannot take the space here to reprint all of B. H. Roberts’ parallels, but Hal Hougey of Pacific Publishing Company, Concord, California, has reprinted them in a pamphlet entitled, “A Parallel”—The Basis of the Book of Mormon.” He has also included some material of his own which tends to strengthen Roberts’ original work.

Like the Book of Mormon, the *View of the Hebrews* has statements concerning the color of the Indians:

Mr. Adair expresses the same opinion; and the Indians have their tradition, that in the nation from which they originally came, all were of **one colour**. (*View of the Hebrews*, 1825, page 88)

Under the last argument he [Mr. Adair] says: “The Indian tradition says that their forefathers in very remote ages came from a far distant country, where all the people were of **one colour**; and that in process of time they removed eastward to their present settlements.” (Ibid., page 152)

The Indians in other regions have brought down a tradition, that their former ancestors, away in a distant region from which they came, **were white**. (Ibid., page 206)

The Book of Mormon states that the descendants of Lehi were originally white, but that the Lamanites were cursed with a dark skin:

And he had caused the cursing to come upon them, yea, even a sore cursing, because of their iniquity. . . . as they were **white** and exceeding fair and delightsome, that they might not be enticing unto my people the Lord did cause a **skin of blackness** to come upon them.

And thus saith the Lord God; I will cause that they shall be loathsome unto thy people, save they shall repent of their iniquities.

And cursed shall be the seed of him that mixeth with their seed; for they shall be cursed even with the same cursing. And the Lord spake it, and it was done. (Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 5:21-23)

The Mormon writer Sidney B. Sperry makes these comments concerning *View of the Hebrews*:

It is true that there are some obvious parallels between Ethan Smith’s book and the Book of Mormon, but parallels can be drawn between the Nephite record and many other early American books. . . . We submit that the style and purpose of *View of the Hebrews*, is so different from that of the Book of Mormon that any fair-minded person who examines the two must have grave doubts that Joseph Smith was any more dependent upon Ethan Smith’s book than upon a dozen other early American publications dealing with the American Indians. (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, Salt Lake City, 1964, pages 178-179)

In his book, *Essentials in Church History*, page 63, the Mormon historian Joseph Fielding Smith includes a photograph of a placard printed by the early Mormons as an advertisement for the Book of Mormon. The bottom line of writing on this placard reads:

“Our fathers once had ‘Sacred Book’ like the white man have, but it was hid in the ground, since then Indian no more prevail against his enemies.”—An aged Indian of the Stockbridge tribe.

No source was given for this statement other than “An aged Indian of the Stockbridge tribe,” but the *View of the Hebrews* has a similar story:

The Rev. Chauncey Cook of Chili, New York, at my house, gave the following information, with liberty of inserting it with his name. He has lately been credibly informed by a minister, . . . that Rev. Dr. West of **Stockbridge**, gave the following information. An old Indian informed him that his fathers in this country had

not long since had a book which they had for a long time preserved. But having lost the knowledge of reading it, they concluded it would be of no further use to them; and they buried it with an Indian chief. (*View of the Hebrews*, page 223)

On the placard published by the Mormons we read that the Book of Mormon is the “stick of Joseph, taken from the hand of Ephraim.” In other words, the Book of Mormon was supposed to have fulfilled Ezekiel’s prophecy about the two sticks. It is interesting to note that Ethan Smith had applied Ezekiel’s prophecy to the Indians before the Book of Mormon was published:

The tribes, as well as the Jews, belong to the “nation scattered and peeled, and terrible from the beginning.” Yes, the stick of Ephraim is to become one in the hand of the prophet, with the stick of the Jews; Ezek. XXXVII. 15.—It is a fact, that the aborigines of this “land shadowing with wings,” are the tribes of Israel; we perceive at once what can be done to fulfil the noted demand of God, as it relates to them. (*View of the Hebrews*, page 247)

## Wonders of Nature

Another book which Joseph Smith may have read before “translating” the Book of Mormon was written by Josiah Priest. It was entitled, *The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed*, and was published in 1825 at Albany, New York. Josiah Priest became a well known author. In fact, the “Fifth Edition” of his work, *American Antiquities*, printed in 1835, contained the statement that “22,000 volumes of this work have been published within thirty months, . . .” We know that Joseph Smith was familiar with Priest’s later work, *American Antiquities*, because he quotes from it in the *Times and Seasons*, Vol. 3, pages 813-814.

Priest’s earlier work, *The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed*, was available in Joseph Smith’s neighborhood prior to the time the Book of Mormon was “translated.” Wesley P. Walters has sent us a photograph of an original copy of this book containing a sticker showing that it belonged to the “Manchester Library.” Mr. Walters also found that library records show that this book was checked out by a number of people during the year 1827. Therefore, it must have been well known in the area of Palmyra and Manchester where Joseph Smith lived.

*The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed* quotes extensively from Ethan Smith’s *View of the Hebrews*. Over thirty pages are devoted to “Proofs that the **Indians** of North America are lineally descended from the ancient **Hebrews**” (*The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed*, Albany, New York, 1825, page 297).

Josiah Priest’s book contains a great deal of information about the Indians. It is interesting to note that Josiah Priest’s book speaks of the “isthmus of Darien” and uses the words “narrow neck of land.” These same

words are found in the Book of Mormon. Below is a comparison of the two statements.

### BOOK OF MORMON

. . . the **narrow neck of land**, by the place where the sea divides the land. (Ether 10:20)

### WONDERS OF NATURE

. . . a **narrow neck of land** is interposed betwixt two vast oceans (page 598)

In our *Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 2, pages 107-108, we show that a statement which was supposed to have been made by Lehi almost 600 years before the time of Christ, contains a quotation from the works of William Shakespeare, who was not born until 1564 A.D. The reader will remember that the Shakespeare quotation read: “. . . From whose bourn no traveller returns . . .” The Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 1:14, reads: “. . . from whence no traveler can return; . . .” The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts admitted that through “school books extant, or through listening to itinerant preachers, the Prophet might have become acquainted with such phraseology as this alleged quotation from Shakespeare, and employed it where it would express some Nephite idea or thought found in the Nephite record” (*New Witnesses for God*, Vol. 3, page 444).

Although we have shown that “Shakespeare’s works, 10 vols. “were sold at the Wayne Bookstore in Joseph Smith’s neighborhood (*Wayne Sentinel*, January 26, 1825), we now have a much better idea of where Joseph Smith might have found these words. In examining Josiah Priest’s *The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed*, we found a story which quotes the words of Shakespeare. In quoting these words, however, they are in the wrong order, and this makes the end of the quotation almost identical to that in the Book of Mormon.

### BOOK OF MORMON

. . . **from whence no traveler can return**; . . . (Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 1:14)

### WONDERS OF NATURE

. . . **from when no traveler returns**. (*The Wonders of Nature*, page 469)

The reader will notice how similar the two quotations are. While it is possible that this could be a coincidence, there is additional evidence which seems to show that Joseph Smith used Priest’s work in writing the Book of Mormon.

## Vapor of Darkness

In the Book of Mormon we read that a “terrible destruction” occurred upon this land at the time Jesus was crucified at Jerusalem. This was followed by three

days of darkness. After the destruction, “there was a voice heard” among all those who were spared. Sometime later Christ appeared to the Nephites. This whole scene reminds one of the second coming of Christ, when the Lord shall come “In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: . . .” (2 Thessalonians 1:8). In the Book of Mormon story we find that the wicked on this land were supposed to have been completely destroyed at that time, leaving only “the more righteous part” of the people (3 Nephi 10:12). Josiah Priest’s book could very well have been the source for this portion of the Book of Mormon, for it contains over eight pages devoted to “the Coming of Christ,” when “The crucified God is returned in glory, to take vengeance upon his enemies: . . .” (*The Wonders of Nature*, page 505). Priest’s description of the end of the world is very vivid. We find these interesting parallels between the material in book and the account of the “terrible destruction” found in the Book of Mormon.

1. Both accounts speak of lightning, thunder and earthquakes.

And there was also a great and terrible tempest; and there was terrible **thunder**, insomuch that it did shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide asunder.

And there were exceeding sharp **lightnings**, . . . the earth was carried up upon the city of Moronihah that in the place of the city there became a great **mountain**. . . .

And thus the face of the whole earth became deformed, because of the tempests, and the **thunderings**, and the **lightnings**, and the quaking of the earth. . . . the **rocks** were rent in twain; they were broken up upon the face of the whole earth, insomuch that they were found in broken fragments, and in seams and in cracks, upon all the face of the land. (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 8:6, 7, 10, 17 and 18)

That appearance of God upon Mount Sinai, . . . will help us a little to form an idea of the last appearance. . . . “There were **thunders**, and **lightnings**, . . . and the whole Mount Quaked greatly”. . .

When, therefore, this mighty God returns again . . . not Mount Sinai only, but all the mountains of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world will tremble at his presence. . . . Earthquakes and subterraneous eruptions will tear the body and bowels of the earth, and **thunders** and convulsive motions of the air rend the skies . . . noises of the sea will be answered again from the land, by falling **rocks** and **mountains**. (*The Wonders of Nature*, pages 505 and 509)

2. Both speak of cities and people being burned.

And many great and notable cities . . . were **burned**, . . . (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 8:14)

. . . here are millions shrieking in the flames at once . . . here is an universal fire through all the cities of the earth, . . . (*The Wonders of Nature*, page 508)

3. Both accounts use the words “thick darkness.”

. . . there was **thick darkness** . . . (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 8:20)

. . . **thick darkness**, and pillars of smoke . . . (*The Wonders of Nature*, page 509)

The Book of Mormon goes on to describe the “thick darkness.” This description was undoubtedly taken from another part of Priest’s book, although part of it could have been taken from the book of Exodus in the Bible. On page 524 of Priest’s book, we find material concerning the plague of darkness which came upon the Egyptians (see Exodus 10:21-23). This was reprinted from *Clarke’s Commentary*, Vol. 1, pages 343-344. We find the following parallels between this material and the Book of Mormon account.

1. Both Priest’s book and the Book of Mormon mention that the darkness could be felt.

. . . the inhabitants . . . could **feel** the vapor of darkness; . . . (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 8:20)

Darkness which may be **felt**. (*The Wonders of Nature*, page 524)

2. Both accounts speak of a vapor or vapors. This is very interesting for the book of Exodus says nothing about a vapor being involved.

. . . **vapor** of darkness; . . . (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 8:20)

Probably this was occasioned by a superabundance of aqueous **vapours** . . . (*The Wonders of Nature*, page 524)

3. Both accounts speak of a mist. The Bible story says nothing about a mist.

. . . there was **thick** darkness . . . And there was not any light seen, . . . so great were the **mists** of darkness . . . (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 8:20 and 22)

. . . aqueous vapours . . . were so **thick** as to prevent the rays of the sun from penetrating through them: an extraordinary **thick mist**, . . . (*The Wonders of Nature*, page 524)

4. In both cases artificial light could not be used.

And there could be no light, because of the darkness, neither candles, neither torches; neither could there be fire kindled with their fine and exceedingly dry wood, so that there could not be any light at all. (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 8:21)

. . . no artificial light could be procured, as the thick clammy vapours would prevent lamps, &c. from burning; . . . (*The Wonders of Nature*, page 524)

5. In both cases the darkness lasted three days.

... it did **last for** the space of **three days** . . . (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 8:23)

... the darkness with its attendant horrors, **lasted for three days**. (*The Wonders of Nature*, page 524)

Josiah Priest devotes about twenty pages of his book to “the phenomena of fire and earthquakes.” These pages could have also furnished structural material for the Book of Mormon’s account of the “terrible destruction.” We find these interesting parallels.

1. Both books speak of a city being swallowed by the sea.

And behold, that great **city** Moroni have I caused to be sunk in the depths of the **sea**, and the inhabitants thereof to be drowned. (Book of Mormon, Nephi 9:4)

The inhabitants ran from their houses, . . . immediately all was silent, the **sea** had quite overwhelmed the **city**, and buried it forever in its bosom. (*The Wonders of Nature*, page 286)

2. Both speak of whole cities being swallowed up in the earth.

And many great and notable cities were sunk, . . . (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 8:14)

And behold, that great city Moronihah have I covered with earth, and the inhabitants thereof, to hide their iniquities and their abominations from before my face. . . .

And behold, the city of Gidal have I caused to be sunk, and the inhabitants thereof to be buried up in the depths of the earth;

Yea, and the city of Onihah and the inhabitants thereof, and the city of Mocom and the inhabitants thereof, . . . (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 9:5-7)

By this means many earthquakes have been occasioned, and whole cities swallowed up. This was undoubtedly the cause of the great earthquake at Port Royal, and of that which swallowed up Lima . . . these fires cause tremblings . . . and perhaps open wide and deep gulfs, wherein whole cities, yea mountains, are swallowed up . . . Pliny tells us, that in his own time, the mountain Cymbotus, with the town of Eurites, which stood on its side, were totally swallowed up . . . Galanis and Garnatus, . . . are recorded to have met the same fate. . . .

The greatest earthquake we find in antiquity is that . . . in which twelve cities . . . were swallowed up in one night. (*The Wonders of Nature*, pages 278, 280 and 281)

3. Both books tell of an inhabited area sinking into the ground and water coming in its place.

... the city of Gilgal have I caused to be sunk, . . . and the city of Jerusalem and the inhabitants thereof; and waters have I caused to come up in the stead thereof, . . . (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 9:6-7)

... during an earthquake . . . the mountain in an instant sunk into the bowels of the earth; and no token of it remained, but a vast lake of water. The like happened in the mountainous parts of China, in 1556: when a whole providence, with all its towns, cities, and inhabitants, was absorbed in a moment; an immense lake of water remaining in its place, . . . (*The Wonders of Nature*, page 281)

From these parallels it would appear that Josiah Priest’s book was used as a source by the author of the Book of Mormon.

## Not Unique

We have seen that in Joseph Smith’s time many people believed that the Indians were “lineally descended from the ancient Hebrews.” A number of books were printed which endorsed this view. Thus it is plain to see that the Book of Mormon is not unique with regard to this matter.

Today, however, the idea that the Indians are Israelites has been almost abandoned. Most scientists feel that the Indian is “basically Mongoloid.” The Smithsonian Institution has issued a statement concerning the origin of the Indians and the Book of Mormon. The following is taken from that statement:

2. The physical type of the American Indian is basically Mongoloid, being most clearly related to that of the peoples of eastern, central, and northeastern Asia. (Statement photographically reproduced in our publication, *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, page 2)

The reaction of Mormon scholars to scientific statements that the Indians are “basically Mongoloid” has been very interesting. Franklin S. Harris, Jr., stated:

The usual view then is that the Indians are of Mongoloid origin, which means straight hair, broad cheek bones, etc.. We cannot deny that many American peoples are of Mongoloid type. (*The Book of Mormon Message and Evidences*, by Franklin S. Harris, Jr., page 69)

The Mormon writer Ariel L. Crowley stated:

It is beyond any question true that some of the tribes of American Indians have a wholly or partially Mongolian ancestry. Any position to the contrary would be directly in the teeth of overwhelming evidence by which this fact is established. . . .

For the foregoing reasons, no missionary of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint should say that all American Indians are descended from Israel. Neither is it proper to say that no American Indians are descended from Mongolian sources. It is equally improper to assert that Indians may not be descended from both sources, and very probably others as well. . . .

A recent statement by Pres. Bruce McConkie of the First Council of Seventy is perhaps as accurate a

statement of the position taken by the leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on this matter as any:

“It is quite apparent that groups of Orientals found their way over the Bering Strait and gradually moved southward to mix with the Indian peoples.” . . .

It does the Church little credit for any of its members to quarrel with facts. It is the truth which the Church proclaims, whatever may be its source, and once ascertained it must fit into the church concept. Our knowledge of America, north, south and central in pre-Columbian times is most scanty, in spite of all that has been and is being done to write its history. This we know. (*About the Book of Mormon*, by Ariel L. Crowley, pages 142, 144 and 145)

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The following is found in a paper presented to the Thirteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures, April 1, 1961, by Joseph E. Vincent:

There is evidence of many times as many men having entered America by means of the Bering land bridge than came with Lehi and his family. But does the average Mormon credit the present day Indian as having come from any ancestor other than Lehi and his son Laman? No, most of them do not.

. . . Why do our people believe or want to believe that all Indians are descendants of Laman when there is so much evidence to show that many more people came to our shores from Northern Asia than ever came with Lehi?



## 10. THE GODHEAD

In the book of Isaiah 44:8 we read: “. . . Is there a God besides me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.” Joseph Smith’s first published work, the Book of Mormon, seems to be in harmony with the teachings of the Bible, for it states that there is **only one God**. In Alma 11:26-31 we read as follows:

Now Zeezrom said unto him: Thou sayest there is a true and living God? And Amulek said: Yea, there is a true and living God. Now, Zeezrom said: **Is there more than one God? And he answered, No.** Now Zeezrom said unto him again: How knowest thou these things? And he said: An angel hath made them known unto me.

The Bible teaches that God is a Spirit. Jesus himself said: “God **is a spirit**: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). In Jeremiah 23:24 we read: “Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. **Do not I fill heaven and earth?** saith the Lord.” The Book of Mormon also teaches that God is a spirit. In Alma 18:26-28, we read as follows:

And then Ammon said: Believest thou that there is a **Great Spirit**? And he said, Yea. And Ammon said: **This is God.**

The Book of Mormon also teaches that Christ was God himself manifest in the flesh. In Mosiah 15:1, 2 and 5, we read the following:

And now Abinadi said unto them: I would that ye should understand that **God himself** shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people. And because he dwelleth in flesh he shall be called the Son of God, and having subjected the flesh to the will of the Father, **being the Father and the Son**— . . . And thus the flesh becoming subject to the **Spirit, or the Son** to the **Father**, being **one God** . . .

This is also in harmony with the Bible, for in 2 Corinthians 5:19 we read as follows: “To wit, that **God was in Christ**, reconciling the world unto himself, . . .”

The three witnesses to the Book of Mormon finished their testimony with the following statement:

And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which **is one God**. Amen. (Book of Mormon, Preface)

### From One to Many

By the year 1844 Joseph Smith had completely disregarded the teachings of the Book of Mormon, for he declared that God was just an exalted man and that men could become Gods. He stated as follows:

First, God himself, who sits enthroned in yonder heavens, **is a man like unto one of yourselves**, that is the great secret. . . . I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined that God was God from all eternity. . . . God himself; the Father of us all dwelt on an earth the same as Jesus Christ himself did, . . . **You have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves**; . . . No man can learn you more than what I have told you. (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 5, pages 613-614)

It is interesting to compare the teachings of the Book of Mormon with a statement which appeared several years later in the *Latter-Day Saints’ Millennial Star*:

#### BOOK OF MORMON

Now Zeezrom said: **Is there more than one God?** And he answered, **No**. (Book of Mormon, Alma 11:28-29)

#### MILLENNIAL STAR

1. Q. Are **there more Gods than one?**

A. **Yes. Many.** 1 Cor. viii. 5. (*The Latter-Day Saints’ Millennial Star*, December 3, 1853, Vol. 15, page 795)

The best way to illustrate Joseph Smith’s change of mind concerning the Godhead is to compare the Book of Moses with the Book of Abraham. Both of these books are printed in the *Pearl of Great Price*—one of the four standard works of the Mormon Church. The Book of

Abraham was supposed to have been given some years after the Book of Moses. Both books are supposed to contain a direct revelation of the creation of the world. While the Book of Moses states that “I, God” created the heavens and the earth, the Book of Abraham states that “they (the Gods)” created the heavens and the earth.

BOOK OF MOSES

... the Lord spake unto Moses, saying: Behold, I reveal unto you concerning this heaven, and this earth; write the words which I speak. ...

And I **God**, said: Let there be light; and there was light. ...

And I **God**, called the dry land Earth; ...

And I God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, ...

And I, **the Lord God**, planted a garden eastward in Eden.

... (Moses 2:1, 3, 10, 25; 3:8)

BOOK OF ABRAHAM

And the Lord said unto me: Abraham. I show these things unto thee before ye go into Egypt, that ye may declare all these words. ...

And they (**the Gods**) said: Let there be light; and there was light. ...

And **the Gods** pronounced the dry land, earth; ...

And **the God** organized the earth to bring forth the beasts after their kind, ...

And **the Gods** planted a garden in Eden, ...

(Abraham 3:15; 4:3, 10, 25; 5:8)

The reader will remember that in another chapter we stated that “the text of the Book of Abraham itself seems to catch Joseph Smith in the process of changing his doctrine concerning the Godhead.” We showed that the first part of the Book of Abraham does not contain the doctrine of a plurality of Gods. This doctrine does not make its appearance until after Abraham 2:18, and this last portion of the Book of Abraham was not “translated” until 1842.

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt made this statement concerning the Mormon doctrine of a plurality of Gods: “This explains the mystery. If we should take a million of worlds like this and number their particles, we should find that there are **more Gods** than there are particles of matter in those worlds” (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, page 345).

The Mormon Church teaches that God the Father had a Father, and that God’s Father also had a Father, and so on. Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made these statements:

Brother Kimball quoted a saying of Joseph the Prophet, that he would not worship a God who had **not a father**; and I do not know that he would if he had not a mother; the one would be as **absurd** as the other. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 9, page 286)

He [God] is our Father—the Father of our spirits, and was **once a man in mortal flesh** as we are, and is now an exalted being.

How many Gods there are, **I do not know**. But there never was a time when there were not Gods and worlds.

It appears ridiculous to the world, under their darkened and erroneous traditions, that God has once been a **finite being**; and yet we are not in such close communion with him as many have supposed. (Ibid., Vol. 7, page 333)

Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency, made these observations:

... then we shall go back to our Father and God, who is connected with one who is still farther back; and this Father is connected with one still further back, **and so on**; ... (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 19)

... for our **God is a natural man**, and as President Young says, our Heavenly Father is the beginning, the first of all mechanics. Where did he get his knowledge from? **From his Father**, just as we get knowledge from our earthly parents. (Ibid., Vol. 8, page 211)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt made these statements:

The Gods who dwell in the Heaven from which our spirits came, are beings who have been redeemed from the grave in a world which existed before the foundations of this earth were laid. They and the Heavenly body which they now inhabit were once in a **fallen state**. ... they were exalted also, from **fallen men** to Celestial **Gods**, to inhabit their Heaven forever and ever. (*The Seer*, page 23)

Personal Gods, then **have a beginning**; they exist first as spirits, **then as men** clothed with **mortal flesh**, then **as Gods**, clothed with immortal tabernacles.

We were begotten by our Father in Heaven; the person of our Father in Heaven was begotten on a previous heavenly world by **his Father**; and again, He was begotten by a still more **ancient Father**; and so on, from generation to generation, from one heavenly world to another still more ancient until our minds are wearied and lost in the multiplicity of generations and successive worlds, and as a last resort, we wonder in our minds, how far back the genealogy extends, and how the first world was formed, and the **first Father** was begotten. (*The Seer*, page 132)

The Mormon Church also teaches that men can become Gods. The Apostle Orson Pratt stated: “... when male and female are restored from the fall, ... they will continue to increase and ... become not only sons of God, but **Gods themselves**” (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1, page 59). Brigham Young made the following statements with regard to this matter:

The Lord created you and me for the purpose of becoming **Gods like himself**; ... We are created, we are born for the express purpose of growing up from the low estate of manhood, to become Gods like unto our Father in heaven. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 3, page 93)

. . . man is the king of kings and lord of lords in embryo. (Ibid., Vol. 10, page 223)

In his book, *The Gospel Through the Ages*, Milton R. Hunter (of the First Council of the Seventy) makes the following statements concerning the doctrine of a plurality of Gods:

He who receives the greatest portion of eternal life becomes **a God**. (*The Gospel Through the Ages*, Salt Lake City, 1958, page 11)

Mormon prophets have continuously taught the sublime truth that God the Eternal Father was once a **mortal man** who passed through a school of earth life similar to that through which we are now passing. He **became** God—an exalted being—through obedience to the same eternal Gospel truths that we are given opportunity today to obey. (Ibid., page 104)

Thus there are a **plurality of Gods**, and it is possible for men to become like the Supreme Being. (Ibid., page 108)

The Mystery Religions, pagan rivals of Christianity, taught emphatically the doctrine that “men may become Gods.” . . . Hermes declared: “We must not shrink from saying that a man on earth is a mortal god, and that God in heaven is an immortal man.” This thought very closely resembles the teachings of Prophet Joseph Smith and of President Lorenzo Snow. (Ibid., page 110)

. . . we must accept the fact that there was a time when Deity was much less powerful than He is today. Then how did He become glorified and exalted and attain His present status of Godhood? In the first place, aeons ago God undoubtedly took advantage of every opportunity to learn the laws of truth and as He became acquainted with each new verity He righteously obeyed it. From day to day He exerted His will vigorously, . . . he gained more knowledge through persistent effort and continuous industry, as well as through absolute obedience, His understanding of the universal laws continued to become more complete. Thus He grew in experience and continued to grow until He attained the status of Godhood. In other words, He **became God** by absolute obedience to all the eternal laws of the Gospel . . .

No prophet of record gave more complete and forceful explanations of the doctrine that men may become Gods than did the American Prophet, . . . (Ibid., pages 114-115)

Bruce R. McConkie, who is also a member of the First Council of Seventy, makes these statements in his book, *Mormon Doctrine*:

There were many meetings, conferences, councils, and schooling sessions held among the Gods and their spirit offspring in pre-existence. (*Mormon Doctrine*, Salt Lake City, 1966, page 163)

President John Taylor wrote as follows: “. . . If we take man, he is said to have been made in the image of God, . . . He did not originate from a chaotic mass of

matter, moving or inert, but came forth possessing, in an embryotic state, all the faculties and powers of a God. And when he shall be perfected, and have progressed, to maturity, he will be like his Father—a God; being indeed his offspring. As the horse, the ox, the sheep, and every living creature, including man, propagates its own species and perpetuates its own kind, so does God perpetuate his. . . .” (Ibid., pages 247-248)

. . . God . . . is a personal Being, a holy and exalted **man**, a glorified, resurrected Personage having a tangible body of flesh and bones, an anthropomorphic Entity, the personal Father of the spirits of all men. (Ibid., page 250)

God the Father is a glorified and perfected Man, a Personage of flesh and bones . . . (Ibid., page 319)

. . . as the Prophet also taught, there is “a God above the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . .” (Ibid., page 322)

Man and God are of the same race, and it is within the power of righteous man . . . to become a holy Man, a Man of Holiness. (Ibid., pages 465-466)

Implicit in the Christian verity that all men are the spirit children of an Eternal Father is the usually unspoken truth that they are also the offspring of an Eternal **Mother**. An exalted and glorified Man of Holiness (Moses 6:57) could not be a Father unless a Woman of like glory, perfection, and holiness was associated with him as a Mother. The begetting of children makes a man a father and a woman a mother whether we are dealing with man in his mortal or immortal state.

This doctrine that there is a **Mother in heaven** was affirmed in plainness by the First Presidency . . . they said that “man, as a spirit, was begotten and born of heavenly parents, . . .” (Ibid., page 516)

Omnipotence consists in having unlimited power, and God has all power, and there is no power which he does not have. . . . Those who obtain exaltation will gain all power and thus themselves be omnipotent. (Ibid., page 544)

. . . there is an infinite number of holy personages, drawn from worlds without number, who have passed on to exaltation and are thus gods

The Prophet also taught . . . that there is “a god above the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . .”

Indeed, this doctrine of plurality of Gods is so comprehensive and glorious that it reaches out and embraces every exalted personage. Those who attain exaltation are gods. (Ibid., page 577)

Those who “are raised to become gods” (*Teachings*, p. 312) will progress . . . until they are “glorified in truth” and know “all things.” . . . God himself, the Father of us all, is a glorified, exalted, immortal, resurrected **man!** (Ibid. page 642-643)

Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became the tenth President of the Church, has made these statements:

**God is an exalted man.** Some people are troubled over the statements of the Prophet Joseph Smith . . . The matter that seems such a mystery is the statement that

our Father in heaven at one time passed through a **life and death** and is an **exalted man**. This is one of the mysteries. . . .

Let me ask, are we not taught that we as sons of God may become like him? . . . The Prophet taught that our Father had a Father and so on. Is not this a reasonable thought, especially when we remember that the promises are made to us that we may become like him? (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, pages 10 and 12)

. . . many earths, . . . were created by the Son for the Father. This was, of course, before he was born a Babe in Bethlehem.

Evidently his Father passed through a period of **mortality** even as he passed through mortality, and as we all are doing. Our Father in heaven, according to the Prophet, had a Father, and since there has been a condition of this kind through all eternity, each Father had a Father, until we come to a stop where we cannot go further, because of our limited capacity to understand. . . . We will become gods and have jurisdiction over worlds, and these worlds will be peopled by our own offspring. We will have an endless eternity for this. (*Ibid.*, Vol. 22 pages 47-48)

The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards made this statement in a letter written in 1866:

There is a statement often repeated in the Church, and while it is not in one of the Standard Church Works, it is accepted as Church doctrine, and this is: **As man is God once was; as God is, man may become!** (Letter from LeGrand Richards to Morris L. Reynolds, dated July 14, 1866)

As we indicated in another volume (see our *Case* Vol. 1, pages 175, 184 and 185) one of Joseph Smith's revelations, *Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 121, has had some serious changes made in it concerning the Godhead. If Joseph Smith falsified the revelation before it was published, as Garland E. Tickemyer suggests, then he was secretly teaching the doctrine of a plurality of Gods before he moved to Illinois. But however this may be, we know that he was teaching this doctrine while he was at Nauvoo, Illinois. We can establish this from both Mormon and anti-Mormon writings. For instance, the *Nauvoo Expositor* for June 7, 1844, contained this information:

Resolved 2nd, Inasmuch as we have for years borne with the individual follies and iniquities of Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, and many other official characters in the Church of Jesus Christ, . . . and inasmuch as they have introduced false and damnable doctrines into the Church, such as a plurality of Gods above the God of this universe, and his liability to **fall with all his creations**; . . . we therefore are constrained to denounce them as apostates from the pure and holy doctrines of Jesus Christ.

In a letter written from the "Vicinity of Nauvoo," June 16, 1844, Sarah Scott stated:

Joseph says there are Gods above the God of this universe as far as he is above us, and if He should transgress

the laws given to Him by those above Him, He would be hurled from **His throne to hell**, as was Lucifer and all his creations with him. (*Among the Mormons*, page 144)

## Book of Mormon Changed

When the witnesses to the Book of Mormon went out into the woods to pray, Joseph Smith claimed a voice spoke from heaven and said: "These plates have been revealed by the power of God, and **they have been translated by the power to God. The translation of them which you have seen is correct**, and I command you to bear record of what you now see and hear" (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, Vol. 1, page 55). In spite of this Joseph Smith tried to change the Book of Mormon to support his concept of a plurality of Gods. Four important changes were made in the second edition of the Book of Mormon concerning the Godhead. One of the most significant changes was made in 1 Nephi 13:40. It was stated in this verse that the purpose of the Nephite records were to make known that Christ is the Eternal Father. The following is a comparison of this verse as it appeared in the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon and the way it appears in modern editions.

### 1830 EDITION

. . . These last records, . . . shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Eternal Father and the Savior of the world; and that all men must come unto Him, or they cannot be saved; (1830 Edition, page 32, lines 5-12)

### CURRENT UTAH EDITIONS

. . . These last records, . . . shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is **the Son of** the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world; and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved. (1 Nephi 13:40)

Another important change was made in 1 Nephi 11:18; this is page 25 of the 1830 edition. In the 1830 edition it read: ". . . Behold, the virgin which thou seest, is the mother **of God**, after the manner of the flesh." In modern editions it has been changed to read: ". . . Behold, the virgin whom thou seest is the mother of **the Son of God**, after the manner of the flesh." The words "the Son of" being inserted in the middle of the sentence. Verse 21 of the same chapter originally read: "And the angel said unto me, behold the Lamb of God, yea, even **the Eternal Father!**" It was changed to read: "And the angel said unto me: Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the **Son of the** Eternal Father!" Verse 32 of the same chapter, which is on page 26 of the original edition, was also changed. In the 1830 edition it read: ". . . the Everlasting God, was judged of the world; and I saw and bear record. It was changed to read: ". . . the **Son of the** everlasting God was judged of the world: and I saw and bear record." Joseph Smith apparently made these changes to support his doctrine of a plurality of Gods.

unto me, Knowest thou the condescension of God? And I said unto him, I know that he loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things. And he said unto me, Behold, the virgin which thou seest, is the mother of God, after the manner of the flesh.

And it came to pass that I beheld that she was carried away in the spirit; and after that she had been carried away in the spirit for the space of a time, the angel spake unto me, saying, look! And I looked and beheld the virgin again, bearing a child in her arms. And the angel said unto me, behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Eternal Father! Knowest thou the meaning of the tree which thy father saw? And I answered him, saying: Yea, it is the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men; wherefore, it is the most desirable above all things. And he spake unto me, saying, Yea, and the most joyous to the soul. And after that he had said these words, he said unto me, look! And I looked, and I beheld the Son of God going forth among the children of men; and I saw many fall down at his feet and worship him.

And it came to pass that I beheld that the rod of iron which my father had seen, was the word of God, which led to the fountain of living waters, or to the tree of life; which waters are a representation of the love of God; and I also beheld that the tree of life was a representation of the love of God. And the angel said unto me again, Look and behold the condescension of God! And I looked and beheld the Redeemer of the world, of which my father had spoken; and I also beheld the prophet, which should prepare the way before him. And the Lamb of God went forth, and was baptised of him; and after that he was baptised, I beheld the Heavens open, and the Holy Ghost come down out of Heaven and abode upon him in the form of a dove. And I beheld that he went forth ministering unto the people, in power and great glory; and the multitudes were gathered together to hear him; and I beheld that they cast him out from among them. And I also beheld twelve others following him.

And it came to pass that they were carried away in the spirit, from before my face, that I saw them not. And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me again, saying, look! And I looked, and I beheld the Heavens open again, and I saw angels descending upon the children of men; and they did minister unto them. And he spake unto me again, saying, look! And I looked, and I beheld the Lamb of God going forth among

A photograph of page 25 of the original 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon. At the two places where the arrows point, the words "the Son of" have been added in later editions.

Dr. Sidney B. Sperry of the Brigham Young University, claims that the words "the son of" were in the original handwritten manuscript, and that they were accidentally omitted when the first edition of the Book of Mormon was printed. He stated:

Mr. Budvarson may be forgiven for some errors, but on pages 14 to 17 of his brochure he makes mistakes that few scholars would forgive him for. He exhibits photo reproductions of pages 25 and 32 of the First Edition of the Book of Mormon, underlining "doctrinal statements concerning God" which he contends were changed in later editions of the Nephite record. Now we grant that the three statements he underlines were changed in later editions, but let us examine the statements and see what possible significance he is entitled to attach to them. . . . Why were these changes made in the text? Mr. Budvarson, of course, would have us believe that the Mormon leaders testified to the "perfectness" of the First Edition, "the God-given supernaturally translated, angel-protected book," (p. 13) and that they could not in good conscience make changes in the text thereafter. But notice what is said in the third paragraph of the Preface of the Second Edition:

Individuals acquainted with book printing, are aware of the numerous typographical errors which always occur in manuscript editions. It is only necessary to say, that the whole (the First Edition) has been carefully re-examined and compared with the original manuscripts,

the children of men. And I beheld multitudes of people which were sick, and which were afflicted of all manner of diseases, and with devils, and unclean spirits; and the angel spake, and shewed all these things unto me. And they were healed by the power of the Lamb of God; and the devils and the unclean spirits were cast out.

And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me again, saying, look! And I looked and beheld the Lamb of God, that he was taken by the people; yea, the Everlasting God, was judged of the world; and I saw and bear record. And I, Nephi, saw that he was lifted up upon the cross, and slain for the sins of the world. And after that he was slain, I saw the multitudes of the earth, that they were gathered together to fight against the apostles of the Lamb; for thus were the twelve called by the angel of the Lord. And the multitude of the earth was gathered together; and I beheld that they were in a large and spacious building, like unto the building which my father saw. And the angel of the Lord spake unto me again, saying, Behold the world and the wisdom thereof; yea, behold, the House of Israel hath gathered together, to fight against the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

And it came to pass that I saw and bear record, that the great and spacious building was the pride of the world; and it fell; and the fall thereof was exceeding great. And the angel of the Lord spake unto me again, saying: Thus shall be the destruction of all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, that shall fight against the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

And it came to pass that the angel said unto me, Look, and behold thy seed, and also the seed of thy brethren! And I looked and beheld the land of promise; and I beheld multitudes of people, yea, even as it were in number, as many as the sand of the sea.

And it came to pass that I beheld multitudes gathered together, to battle one against the other; and I beheld wars, and rumors of wars, and great slaughters with the sword among my people.

And it came to pass that I beheld many generations pass away, after the manner of wars and contentions in the land; and I beheld many cities, yea, even that I did not number them.

And it came to pass that I saw a mist of darkness on the face of the land of promise; and I saw lightnings, and I heard thunderings, and earthquakes, and all manner of tumultuous

A photograph of page 26 of the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon. The arrow points to the place where the words "the Son of" were added in later editions.

by elder Joseph Smith, Jr., the translator of the book of Mormon, assisted by the present printer, brother O. Cowdery, who formerly wrote the greatest portion of the same as dictated by brother Smith.

Does this paragraph give the impression that the early leaders of the Church (Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were the two highest) thought the First Edition was perfect in every respect, text and all? Quite the contrary, Mr. Budvarson. They knew that typographical errors had crept into the 1830 edition in the course of printing. So they attempted to correct those errors by comparing the original manuscripts with the 1830 text. The changes they made in the statements underlined by you on pages 14 and 15 of your brochure are simple corrections of errors in the First Edition. They are corrections (including grammar) such as might be made in the second edition of any book. That the italicized words above were, . . . accidental omissions in the First Edition is also proved by the fact that the manuscript of the Book of Mormon written by Oliver Cowdery and now in the possession of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints at Independence, Missouri, contains the added words. (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, by Sidney B. Sperry, pages 197-198)

This statement by Dr. Sperry is very misleading, for evidence shows that the Book of Mormon manuscript (which the Reorganized LDS Church has in its possession) has been tampered with. Those who have

examined this manuscript (or photographs of it) in the Reorganized Church Library, claim that the words "the son of" have been added into the original manuscript in two places. Three interpolations are written above the line and were obviously not in the manuscript at the time the Book of Mormon was first published. Samuel Wood, who examined the manuscript, made this statement:

The author of this work, through the courtesy of, and in company with, the Church Historian of the Reorganized L.D.S. Church, Rev. S. A. Burgess, examined the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon to verify this passage. The text is found at page 16 of the manuscript. It shows that a caret had been inserted between the words "of" and "God," as rendered in the last line of the above quotation, and the three words, "the Son of" written in above the line. It was done with a heavier pen and evidently by a different hand from that of the original scribe. (*The Infinite God*, 1934, pages 56-57)

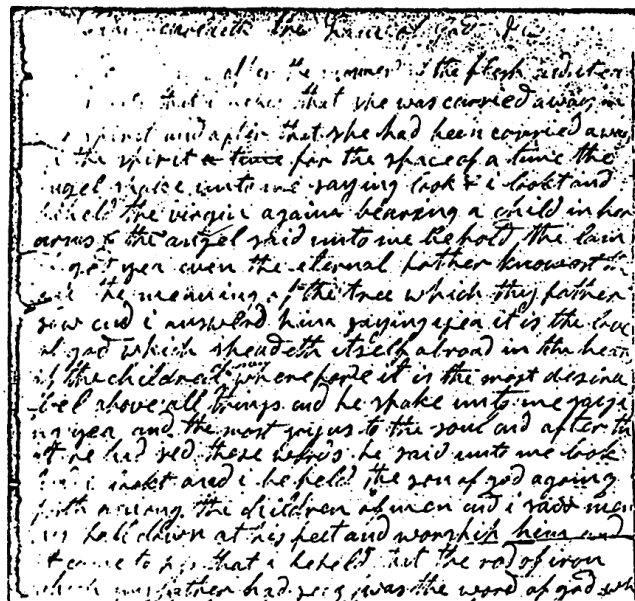
It is very obvious that the interpolations were made after the first edition of the Book of Mormon was printed; otherwise the printer would have included them in the first edition. It is also interesting to note that interpolations were only made in two places in the manuscript, whereas the words "the Son of" were added into the printed text of the Book of Mormon in four different places. The fact that the interpolations do not appear in these two places certainly seems to give the whole thing away. Daniel T. Muir, Staff Assistant for the Reorganized Church's Department of History, made this statement in a letter dated February 21, 1968: "Your original notations regarding the interpolation of 'the son of' in the Book of Mormon manuscript are correct. 'The son of' is inserted in the first and fourth instances on the manuscript, but is not there in the second or third instance." Richard P. Howard, RLDS Church Historian, has recently made

these very revealing statements regarding this matter:

While it appears likely that the major emphases in the 1830-1837 emendation on the E MS [the manuscript owned by the Reorganized Church] were grammatical and stylistic, it can also be demonstrated that theological considerations were operative. For example, note the following two places in 1 Nephi which reflect Joseph Smith's clarification in 1837 of his post-1830 understanding of the Godhead, at least insofar as God and Christ were thought to be involved at those points . . .

It should be noted that the preceding two revisions of the 1830 text were written into the manuscript for the 1837 printer, as evidenced in column 3. However, two very similar changes involving the identical interpolation were included in the 1837 edition but **not recorded in the manuscript**. (*Restoration Scriptures*, Independence, Mo., 1969, pages 47-48)

It is very interesting to note that Dr. Sperry says nothing of the manuscript of the Book of Mormon which his own church has. Before the Book of Mormon was ever published another handwritten copy was made in case the first one was stolen. The Reorganized LDS Church has one manuscript and the Utah Mormon Church has a small portion of the other. The portion which the Utah Mormon Church has includes three of the four places we are discussing. Photographs reveal that the words "the son of" do not appear in any of these places. Below is an actual photograph of the handwritten manuscript of the Book of Mormon which is in the LDS Church Historian's Library. The arrow points to the line which is printed as 1 Nephi 11:21. Notice that the manuscript reads: ". . . even the eternal father." This is in harmony with the 1830 Edition of the Book of Mormon, and proves that the reading found in current editions (" . . . even **the Son of the Eternal Father!**") has been falsified.



Thus we see that the claim that the printer accidentally omitted these words in the first edition is ridiculous. Arthur Budvarson, in his book, *The Book of Mormon—True or False?* criticizes the Mormon Church for making these changes. Dr. Sperry claims, however, that these were just typographical errors, and makes this comment concerning Mr. Budvarson:

We think we have shown that Mr. Budvarson has failed to do his “homework” in connection with the three texts he brings up on pages 14-17 of his brochure. The charges he makes are inexcusable. They were made without the investigation expected of a scholar. (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, page 199)

When the truth is known, we find that Dr. Sperry is the one who did not do his “homework.” If he had examined the portion of the manuscript which his own church has in its possession he could not have made the claim that the words “the Son of” were in the original manuscript.

## Removing the Lectures

In 1835 the “Lectures on Faith,” which were originally delivered before a class of the Elders, in Kirtland, Ohio, were printed in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. In these lectures it was definitely stated that God the Father was a personage of **spirit**. In the fifth lecture we find this statement about the Godhead:

... the **Father being a personage of spirit**, glory, and power, possessing all perfection and fullness, the Son, ... a personage of tabernacle, ... (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 1835 edition, page 53)

The “Lectures on Faith” not only taught that God the Father is a **spirit**, but also that God is omnipresent—i.e., present everywhere at the same time. In the second lecture the following statement is made:

2. We here observe that God is the only supreme governor and independent being in whom all fullness and perfection dwells; who is omnipotent, **omnipresent**, and omniscient; without beginning of days or end of life; ... (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 1835 edition, page 12)

On page 26 of the 1835 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* the following is stated: “... he is omnipotent, **omnipresent**, and omniscient; without beginning of days ...”

Joseph Fielding Smith admits that Joseph Smith helped prepare these lectures:

Now the **Prophet** did know something about these *Lectures on Faith*, because he helped to prepare them, and he helped also to, revise these lectures before they were published, ... (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, page 195)

These “Lectures on Faith” were printed in all of the early editions of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, but they

have been removed from recent editions. John William Fitzgerald, in his thesis, “A Study of the Doctrine & Covenants” states as follows:

The reasons for the omission of these Lectures from *The Doctrine and Covenants* beginning with the 1921 edition and from all subsequent editions as given to the writer by Elder Joseph Fielding Smith were as follows:

(a) They were not received as revelations by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

(b) They are instructions relative to the general subject of faith. They are explanations of this principle but not doctrine.

(c) They are not complete as to their teachings regarding the Godhead. More complete instructions on this point of doctrine are given in section 130 of the 1876 and all subsequent editions of *The Doctrine and Covenants*.

(d) It was thought by Elder James E. Talmage, chairman, and other members of the committee who were responsible for their omission that to avoid confusion and contention on this vital point of belief, it would be better not to have them bound in the same volume as the commandments or revelations which make up *The Doctrine and Covenants*. (“A Study of the Doctrine & Covenants,” by John William Fitzgerald, Master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, page 344)

The reasons Joseph Fielding Smith gave John William Fitzgerald as to why the “Lectures on Faith” were removed from the *Doctrine and Covenants* are very interesting. Reason (a), that they “were not received as revelations” could hardly be considered a reason at all. If every section that is not a revelation was removed from the *Doctrine and Covenants*, it would be a much shorter book. There are at least nine, if not more, sections in the *Doctrine and Covenants* that are not revelations; they are sections 102, 113, 121, 123, 128, 131, 134 and 135.

Reason (b), that they were “not doctrine” does not agree with the statement on page 256 of the 1835 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. This statement reads as follows:

... that the lectures were judiciously arranged and compiled, and **were profitable for doctrine**; ...

Joseph Smith himself signed a statement which was printed in the Preface to the 1835 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. In this statement we read:

The first part of the book will be found to contain a series of Lectures as delivered before a Theological class in this place, and in consequence of their embracing the important **Doctrine of Salvation**, we have arranged them into the following work.

Reason (c), “that they are not complete as to their teachings regarding the Godhead is getting much closer to the truth than the first two reasons. A more correct way of wording this, however, might be, “they contradict what is now taught concerning the Godhead in the Mormon Church.”



Actually, these lectures were considered complete with regard to their teachings concerning the Godhead at the time they were given. On pages 58 of the 1835 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, the following question and answer appear:

Q. Does the foregoing account of the Godhead lay a sure foundation for the exercise of faith in him unto life and salvation?

A. **It does.**

Of course, now that the Mormon Church teaches a plurality of Gods, these lectures are considered “not complete” as to their teachings on the Godhead. In reality they actually contradict what is presently taught by the Church leaders with regard to this subject.

Reason (d), that to avoid “confusion and contention on this vital point of belief, it would be better not to have them bound in the same volume” is probably the true reason they were left out. Certainly it would cause confusion and contention in the Mormon Church if one of the elders started to teach that God is a personage of spirit and is everywhere present at the same time, as the Lectures on Faith taught.

So to avoid “confusion and contention the Mormon leaders slyly removed the Lectures of Faith from the *Doctrine and Covenants*, even though Joseph Smith had thought them important enough to be included. They were even voted on unanimously by a conference held in 1835. John William Fitzgerald states as follows in his thesis:

The “Lectures on Faith” were voted on unanimously by the conference assembled August 17, 1835 to be included in the forthcoming book of doctrine and covenants. The writer could find no documentary evidence that they were voted on by a general conference of the Church to be omitted in the 1921 and all subsequent editions of *The Doctrine [and] Covenants*. ( *A Study of the Doctrine & Covenants*, by John William Fitzgerald, page 345)

## Inspired Corrections

In our book, *Mormon Scriptures and the Bible*, we deal extensively with Joseph Smith’s “Inspired Version of the Bible.” In this chapter we will consider a few changes he made concerning the Godhead. Since the Inspired Revision of the Bible is a product of Joseph Smith’s earlier thinking, it does not contain the idea of a plurality of Gods or the doctrine that men can become Gods.

Joseph Smith made a very interesting change in Luke 10:22 (verse 23 of the Inspired Revision); in the King James Version it reads:

... no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.

Joseph Smith changed this to read as follows:

... no man knoweth that the **Son is the Father, and the Father is the Son**, but him to whom the Son will reveal it.

As Joseph Smith began to develop the idea of a plurality of Gods, he also began to ignore the changes he had made in his “Inspired Revision.” Revelations 1:6 was one of the verses Joseph Smith changed in the *Inspired Version of the Bible*. In the King James Version it read as follows: “And hath made us kings and priests unto God **and** his Father; . . .”

With an improper understanding of the language used in the scriptures, it would be possible to read this verse with the understanding that God himself had a Father. This is because of the fact that the word “and” is used between the words “God” and “his Father.” In the Inspired Version of the Bible, Joseph Smith left out the word “and” so that this verse could not be used to support the idea of a plurality of Gods. He worded it as follows: “. . . and hath made us kings and priests unto God, his Father.”

In 1844, after Joseph Smith had developed the idea of a plurality of Gods, he decided that the rendition given in the King James Version of the Bible was correct; thus showing that his own “inspired” rendition of this verse was wrong. In a sermon delivered June 16, 1844, and recorded in the *History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 473, we read as follows:

President Joseph Smith read the 3rd chapter of Revelation, and took for his text let chapter, 6th verse—”And hath made us kings and priests unto **God and His Father**: to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

Now, after quoting this text from the King James Version, Joseph Smith remarked that the translation of it was correct: “It is altogether correct in the translation” (*History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 473). Thus he completely ignored his own “Inspired” rendition of this verse, and went on to preach a sermon on the plurality of Gods, using this as a text. On page 474 of the same volume, Joseph Smith stated:

I will preach on the plurality of Gods. I have selected this text for that express purpose . . .

Our text says “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father.” . . . My object was to preach the scriptures, and preach the doctrine they contain, . . . Paul says there are Gods many and Lords many; and that makes a plurality of Gods, in spite of the whims of all men. . . .

If Abraham reasoned thus—If Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and John discovered that God the Father of Jesus Christ **had a father**, you may suppose that **he had a father also**. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 6, pages 474-476)

Another interesting change that Joseph Smith made in the Bible is found in Exodus 7:1. In the King James Version it reads as follows: "And the Lord said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a **god** to Pharaoh: . . ." In the *Inspired Version of the Bible*, Joseph Smith changed this verse to read: "And the Lord said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a **prophet** to Pharaoh; . . ." Joseph Smith was apparently trying to destroy the idea of Moses being a god, so he changed the verse to read that Moses was a prophet instead of a god. In 1844, however, he again changed his mind and decided that Moses was a God. He stated:

The scriptures are a mixture of very strange doctrines to the Christian world, who are blindly led by the blind. I will refer to another scripture. "Now" says God, when He visited Moses in the bush, (Moses was a stammering sort of a boy like me) God said, "Thou shalt be a God unto the children of Israel." (*History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 478)

On August 29, 1852, the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt referred to Exodus 7:1, but he used the rendition found in the King James Version of the Bible rather than the "inspired" rendition given by Joseph Smith: "The Scriptures speak of more Gods than one. Moses was called a God to Aaron, in plain terms; . . ." (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1, page 56).

## Elohim

In 1844 Joseph Smith claimed that the word *Elohim*, which is usually translated God in the Bible, should really be translated "Gods":

In the very beginning the Bible shows there is a plurality of Gods beyond the power of refutation. It is a great subject I am dwelling on. The word *Eloheim* ought to be in the plural all the way through **Gods**. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 476)

In the Mormon publication, *Millennial Star*, we find a similar statement:

And in the beginning of Genesis, and throughout the bible, the Hebrew word *Elohim* (*Gods*), is actually in the plural, though the translators have rendered it (*God*) in the singular. (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 3, page 71)

This criticism is not confined to Mormon scholars. William McCarthy, a critic of the Bible, made this statement:

The first verse of the bible is an example: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The earliest text was: "In the beginning Elohim created . . ." Had these compilers been honest, they would have said: "In the beginning the gods created . . ." . . . The bible's compilers lied more than twenty-five hundred times by changing the plural, *Elohim*, *gods*, into the singular *god*.

(*Bible, Church and God*, by William McCarthy, Truth Seeker Co., New York, N.Y., 1946, page 174)

In the *History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 475, we find this statement by Joseph Smith:

. . . *Eloheim* is from the word *Eloi*, *God*, in the singular number; and by adding the word *heim*, it renders it *Gods*. . . . I defy all the world to refute me. . . . I once asked a learned Jew, "If the Hebrew language compels us to render all words ending in *heim* in the plural, why not render the first *Eloheim* plural?" He replied, "That is the rule with few exceptions; but in this case it would ruin the Bible."

While it is true that the Hebrew word *Elohim* has a masculine plural ending, this does not mean that it should be rendered "Gods" throughout the Bible as Joseph Smith would have us believe. Actually, it can be rendered either "God" or "gods." How it should be translated depends on the context of the sentence in which it appears. In *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary* we find these statements concerning this matter:

*‘Elohim* is the usual word for "God" in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic. It is actually plural in form, but is used with a verb in the singular. Perhaps the plural is best explained as indicating "plenitude of might" or exceptional dignity and unlimited greatness. In this One are united all the powers of eternity and infinity. (*The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, Chicago, 1968, page 2)

*‘Elohim* is plural in form. It is usually translated "God." But it can be translated "gods," as, for instance, when it refers to the gods of the heathen neighbors of Israel. (*Ibid.*, page 11)

J. H. Hertz made this comment concerning the word "Elohim": "Elohim is a plural form, which is often used in Hebrew to denote plenitude of might. Here it indicates that God comprehends and unifies all the forces of eternity and infinity" (*The Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, Vol. 1, page 2).

Even Theophile James Meek, who felt that the Hebrews originally believed in a plurality of gods and developed the idea of monotheism only after a long process of evolution, had to admit that the word "Elohim" can be translated "God":

Another word, *‘elohim*, is a plural form and besides meaning "gods," or as an intensive plural "god" it has the force of "strong, mighty"; . . . (*Hebrew Origins*, New York, 1960, page 84)

. . . *‘elohim* in the Old Testament, came to designate the totality of the gods, and so could mean "god" as well as "gods," but all these plurals are instances of a common Semitic idiom, the intensive plural or the plural of majesty, and carry no deep theological implications whatever. (*Ibid.*, page 196)

In the English language we also have words that are exactly the same in the singular and plural. The word “deer” for instance, can be used to refer to one, two or many deer, and only the context of the sentence reveals exactly what is meant. We could say, “I saw several deer” and the reader would immediately know that we were referring to more than one deer. But if we say, “I saw a deer, the context shows that we are speaking of only one deer. The same can be said of the following words: sheep, trout, species, Chinese, Portuguese, moose or fish. A person can only determine whether these words are singular or plural by the context in which they appear.

When Joseph Smith stated that “Elohim” should always be rendered “Gods,” he was making serious mistake, for this would be ignoring the context in which the word appears. It would be just as unreasonable to say that the English word “deer” always refers to two or more animals.

Below are three Hebrew words which have the masculine plural ending but can be translated as singular or plural as the context requires. Since Hebrew reads from right to left the ending of each word is on the left hand side.

HEBREW WORD	PRONOUNCED	TRANSLATES
אֱלֹהִים	Elohim	God, Gods, angels or judges
פָּנִים	Panim	face or faces
תְּרָפִים	Teraphim	idol, idols, image or images

Now let us consider two verses that contain the word “Elohim.” The first is Exodus 18:11. In this verse *Elohim* is translated “gods”: “Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods: . . .” Common sense tells us that we can not render *Elohim* as “God” in this instance. If we did we would have a translation that would not make sense: “Now I know that the Lord is greater than all *God*: . . .”

In our second example (Exodus 20:2) we find just the opposite or in this case *Elohim* must be rendered “God”: “I am the Lord thy *God*, . . .” It would be impossible to render *Elohim* as plural in this instance. If we did it would read: “I am the Lord thy *gods*, . . .” Obviously, the word “gods” would not be compatible with the word “I” at the first of the verse. The word “I” comes from the Hebrew word *anoki* (אֲנֹכִי) and is translated “I” or “me.” Therefore, it is clear that *Elohim* must be rendered as singular in this verse.

The word *panim* can be translated as either “face” or “faces” as indicated above. In Genesis 50:1 we read: “And Joseph fell upon his father’s *face*, . . .” The same word, however, is translated *faces* in Genesis 9:23: . . . their *faces* were backward, . . .”

The word *teraphim* is translated as “images” in Genesis 31:19: “. . . Rachel had stolen the *images* . . .” In 1 Samuel 19:13, however, *teraphim* is rendered “image”: “And Michal took an *image*, and laid it in the bed, and put a pillow of goats’ hair for his bolster, and covered it with a cloth.”

When we examine the structure of the Hebrew language we find that Joseph Smith’s statement that *Elohim* should be translated “Gods” throughout the Bible is incorrect. In fact, Joseph Smith himself sometimes used the word *Elohim* when speaking of God the Father: “We believe in the Great Eloheim who sits enthroned in yonder heavens!” (*History of the Church*, Vol. 5, page 499). The Mormon writer Hyrum L. Andrus makes the following statement about this matter: “. . . Joseph Smith used the exalted name-title ‘Elohim’ to designate the Father. The word ‘Elohim’ is a plural term meaning ‘Gods,’ as the Prophet pointed out while analyzing the meaning of the term in Hebrew, and in this sense he also used it. Either usage is appropriate, and the reader must determine from the context of the statement in which sense it is being applied” (*God, Man and the Universe*, page 113).

Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of Seventy, admits that *Elohim* is not always plural in meaning: “*Elohim*, plural word though it is, is also used as the exalted name-title of *God* the Eternal Father, a usage that connotes his supremacy and omnipotence, he being God above all Gods” (*Mormon Doctrine*, Salt Lake City, 1966, page 224).

If Joseph Smith’s statement that *Elohim* should always be translated “Gods” were true we would expect to find the word *Elohim* rendered as “Gods” throughout his “Inspired Version” of the Bible, but instead we find it rendered “Gods just like the King James Version. It is very interesting to compare Genesis 1:3 of the King James Version with Joseph Smith’s “translation.” In the King James Version we read: “And God said, Let there be light: . . .” Joseph Smith changed this to read: “And *I*, God, said, Let there be light, . . .” (Inspired Version, Genesis 1:6; also found in *Pearl of Great Price*, Moses 2:3). Notice that Joseph Smith has added the word *I*, thus making it even more apparent that the verse is referring to only one God. In the Book of Abraham, however, Joseph Smith completely reversed his position with regard to this matter, for in Abraham 4:3 we read: “And **they (the Gods)** said: Let there be light; . . .”

Louis C. Zucker, Professor Emeritus of English and Lecturer in Hebrew at the University of Utah, has written a very interesting article concerning Joseph Smith’s work in the Hebrew language. In this article he states:

How does Joseph use the Hebrew term-name *Elohim* or Eloheem, *God*? In translating “Elohim” in Exodus 22:28, he changed the King James “the gods” to “God.” The Revised Version (R. V.), followed by the standard Jewish translation of 1917, changed “the gods” to “the judges.” Joseph was a strict monotheist then. Likewise, in the Book of Moses, he positively, militantly makes “God” singular in recounting the creation of the universe and does not at all depart from monotheism in the first three chapters of the Book of Abraham nor in the Explanations of the three Facsimiles. But, in the fourth and fifth chapters of this later book, Joseph is triumphantly positive that Eloheem means “the Gods.” . . .

At the Annual Conference of the Church held in Nauvoo in early April, 1844, Joseph once more theologized with Hebrew, . . . Joseph makes the first three words of Genesis 1:1 into statements as follows: "The head one of the Gods brought forth the Gods"; in other words, "The head God brought forth the Gods in the Grand Council." Seixas's Manual (p. 85) translates the whole verse, word for word: "In the beginning, he created, God [God created,] the heavens, and the earth." But Joseph, with audacious independence, changes the meaning of the first word, and takes the third word "Eloheem" as literally plural. He ignores the rest of the verse, and the syntax he imposes on his artificial three-word statement is impossible. . . .

If there has been another artist of religion in modern times who, excepting his blatant imitator "Baneemy," transformed the Hebrew of the Bible to suit his own purposes as freely as did Joseph Smith, who would he be? (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, pages 51, 52, 53 and 55)

The change Joseph Smith made in Exodus 22:28—which Louis C. Zucker refers to—is very interesting. In the King James Version we read: "Thou shalt not revile the gods. . . ." In his Inspired Version, Joseph Smith changed this to read: "Thou shalt not revile against God, . . ." It is interesting to note that Adam Clarke, a Protestant writer, suggested the word "God" as the correct translation in this instance (see *Clarke's Commentary*, Vol. 1, page 417). While it is possible that Joseph Smith obtained his idea from Clarke, we must also remember that Joseph Smith did not believe in a plurality of Gods at the time he made his revision and may have just automatically made this change.

## Hands or Wings?

In the *Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 1, pages 89, 128 and 129, we showed that the Mormon leaders have used Joseph Smith's story of his First Vision as proof that God the Father has a body. George Q. Cannon, who was a member of the First Presidency, stated: "Joseph saw that the Father had a form; that He had a head; that He had arms; that He had limbs; that He had feet; that He had a face and a tongue with which to express His thoughts; . . ." (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 24, page 372).

In 1965, however, we printed *Joseph Smith's Strange Account of the First Vision*. This booklet contained the earliest account of the First Vision. It was dictated by Joseph Smith but had been suppressed by the leaders of the Church for 130 years. This document proved beyond all doubt that Joseph Smith did not see God the Father in 1820, and that this element was added to the story after Joseph Smith changed his mind concerning the Godhead. Mormon scholars have been forced to admit that this document is genuine. In fact, an article has even been published in the Church's *Improvement Era*. This article, by James B. Allen, contains some very revealing statements concerning this matter:

In 1965 a graduate student at Brigham Young University [Paul R. Cheesman,] presented a gentle surprise to Mormon scholars when he included in his master's thesis a heretofore unknown description of Joseph Smith's First Vision. . . . Paul Cheesman's find demonstrated that the story of the First Vision had been dictated as early as 1831-32. . . . This important document was written when Joseph Smith was 25 or 26 years old. . . .

Whenever new historical information is published, a host of questions demand answers, and the disclosure that Joseph Smith told his story more than once has been no exception. . . . the 1831-32 version, which was the first to be recorded, is actually the most comprehensive of all. This early narrative includes all the essential elements of the more carefully prepared Manuscript History and contains more addition details than any other source. When all the accounts are combined, only two areas appear that may need some explanation: (1) the time of the vision and (2) the fact that the first account appears to make specific reference to **only one personage**. (*Improvement Era*, April 1970, pages 5 and 6)

Although Dr. Allen attempts to explain why Joseph Smith does not mention God the Father as being present in the vision, his arguments are very weak and unconvincing. If Joseph Smith had really seen God the Father, he certainly would have told about it in this first handwritten account of the First Vision.

It would appear, then, that the story of the First Vision can no longer be used to support the idea of a plurality of Gods or that God the Father has a body. (For a more complete treatment of this subject see our publication, *The First Vision Examined—A Study of New Theories & Documents Regarding a Joseph Smith's First Vision & The 1820 Revival*.)

When the Mormons first started arguing about whether God had "body, parts or passions," they were not referring to God the Father, but rather to the question of whether Christ had a resurrected body. In 1834 Oliver Cowdery wrote the following:

The Presbyterians are about as inconsistent; and the Methodist cannot be blamed, if they believe their creed, because they pretend to worship a God who has neither "body nor parts," and if they should get him to come down among them, he could not be seen, for there would be nothing to be seen. We suppose that they must think that he has lost himself since his ascension into heaven; for the apostles saw him go up and a cloud receive him out of their sight, and the angels standing by, said, Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same **Jesus** which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. (*The Evening and the Morning Star*, April 1834, Vol. 2, no. 19, page 149)

The reader will notice that there is no reference to God the Father in the quotation above. By 1842, however, the Mormons were definitely teaching that the Father had a body. The following statements appeared in the *Millennial Star*:

The Church of England, the Methodists, and, I believe, the Church of Scotland, in their several Articles of Religion, describe a God “without body, parts, or passions.”

Now of all the species of idolatry ever invented by superstition and priestcraft, in either ancient or modern times, we do think this caps the climax. Indeed it can hardly be said to be idolatry, for strictly speaking it amounts to Atheism. . . . this God and no God, is as contrary to Scripture as to reason and common sense. The Old and New Testament everywhere reveals a God with body, parts, and passions. The following are a few of the many texts which speak of his body and parts:

Image.—Gen. 1st, 27th.

Eyes.—Prov. xv. 3rd.

Mouth.—Isaiah lv. 11th.

Nose.—Isaiah lxxv. 5th

Lips and Tongue.—Isaiah xxx. 27th

Ear.—2d Kings xix. 16th

Soles of his feet.—Ezekiel xliii. 7th.

Arm.—Jeremiah xxi. 5th

Finger.—Exod. xxxi. 18th

Fingers.—Psalms viii. 3rd

Loins.—Exek. i. 27th

Heart.—Gen. vi. 6th

Nostrils.—Exod. xv. 8th

Hand, face, and back parts.—Exod. xxxiii. 22nd

The foregoing abundantly show that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ had both body and parts, to say nothing of Jesus Christ, . . . (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 2, page 184)

The reader will notice that this article states that the “Old and New Testament everywhere reveals a God with body, parts, and passions,” yet of the fourteen references cited not one is taken from the New Testament. Occasionally Mormons will refer to Acts 7:55 as evidence that God has a body: “But he, . . . saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, . . .” In scripture the “right hand” of God is considered to be a position of favor or power. At the judgment described in Matthew 25:33-41 the righteous are found at the “right hand,” whereas the wicked are at the “left hand.” In Isaiah 41:10 we read: “. . . I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”

On one occasion Jesus himself said: “. . . ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the **right hand of power**, and coming in the clouds of heaven” (Mark 14:62). Now, certainly no one would argue that this verse proves that “power” is a man or literally has a right hand.

Some of the Old Testament verses used by Mormons in an attempt to prove that God has a body were never meant to be taken literally. For instance, Exodus 15:8, cited above as evidence that God has nostrils, reads as follows: “And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.” We feel that it would be just as ridiculous to claim

that the “heart of the sea” is a literal heart as to claim that the word “nostrils” actually proves that God has a nose.

Another verse cited above is Proverbs 15:3: “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.” If the word “eyes” were taken literally it would seem to imply that God has many eyes, for how could just two eyes be “in every place”? In 2 Chronicles 16:9 we read: “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, . . .” It would be impossible to interpret the word “eyes” literally in this case; however, if we accept the fact that “God is a **spirit**” (John 4:24) and that he fills “heaven and earth (Jeremiah 23:24), we can easily understand the meaning of this verse—i.e., that God is able to watch over his entire creation.

To attempt to interpret some of these words literally to prove that God has a body is making a great mistake, for they are sometimes used to describe even inanimate objects. For instance, in Exodus 10:5 we read that locusts were to “cover the face of the earth.” The original Hebrew for this verse reads that locusts were to “cover the **eye** of the land” (*The Interlinear Literal Translation of the Hebrew Old Testament*, Chicago, 1946, page 259).

In Genesis 19:28 we read that Abraham “looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, . . .” The original Hebrew reads that he “looked out upon the **face** of Sodom and Gomorrah, . . .” In Exodus 26:9 we read of “the forefront of the tabernacle.” The literal translation, however, is “the **face** of the tent.” Many other examples could be cited.

If a person decided to interpret Psalms 91:4 only according to the literal meaning of the words, he could make a very good case for the idea that God is a bird: “He shall cover thee with his **feathers**, and under his **wings** shalt thou trust: . . .”

Joseph Fielding Smith, who is now President of the Mormon Church, has admitted that some of the expression used in the Old Testament concerning God are figurative:

The statement that men anciently “walked with God” we accept, of course, as a figure of speech. It means that they were in perfect harmony and at the same time receiving constant guidance and revelation from the Lord. It does not mean that they were privileged to walk along the streets, for instance, as Jesus walked with the two disciples after his resurrection. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 4)

The scriptural accounts of talking face to face and of walking with God should not be interpreted in the sense that the Savior stood before those prophets and revealed his whole person. That he may have done so at later periods in the cases of Abraham and Moses is possible, but he had not done so in that fulness in the antediluvian days. (*Ibid.*, page 37)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt freely quoted the Old Testament to prove that God the Father has a body of flesh and bone:

For instance, the Lord and two other heavenly personages appeared to Abraham, who besought them to tarry until something could be prepared for them to eat; . . . and they did eat. Can you conceive of a more ridiculous idea than for a person without body or parts to sit down to a meal and eat? . . . Jacob also tells us that he saw God face to face; and we have many declarations made by many of the ancient Prophets to the effect that they saw him. . . . they saw him as a man, and those who saw him describe him as a man, as having a head, eyes, ears, mouth, etc., in common with the human family, his children. (*Masterful Discourses and Writings of Orson Pratt*, Compiled by N. B. Lundwall, Salt Lake City, 1962, pages 291-292)

Man has legs, so has God, as is evident from his appearance to Abraham. Man walks with his legs, so does Gods sometimes, as is evident from his going with Abraham towards Sodom. . . . “A man wrestled with Jacob until the breaking of day”; after which, Jacob says: “I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.” (Gen. 32:24-30.) That this person had legs is evident from his wrestling with Jacob. His image and likeness was so much like man’s that Jacob at first supposed him to be a man. (See 24th verse.) God, though in the figure of a man has many powers that man has not. (Ibid., page 315)

Mormon writers who try to use the Old Testament to prove that God has a body are faced with a very serious problem, for their own theology plainly teaches that Jehovah (the God of the Old Testament) is Jesus Christ. Therefore, any appearance of the God of the Old Testament is only an appearance of the pre-existent Christ and does not prove that God the Father has a body. Joseph Fielding Smith, the new President of the Mormon Church, seems to realize this and has made some comments which are in direct contradiction to those made by the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt:

. . . Jesus Christ was Jehovah, who led Israel in the days of Abraham and Moses, and in fact from the days of Adam. Also that Jehovah, or Jesus Christ, as a personage of Spirit appeared to the Brother of Jared, . . . (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 11)

We are **not** justified in teaching that our Heavenly Father, with other heavenly persons, came down, dusty and weary, and ate with Abraham. . . . These three men were mortals. They had bodies and were able to eat, to bathe, and sit and rest from their weariness. Not one of these three was the Lord. . . . Who wrestled with Jacob on Mount Peniel? The scriptures say it was a man. The Bible interpreters say it was an angel. More than likely it was a messenger sent to Jacob to give him the blessing. To think he wrestled and held an angel who couldn’t get away, is out of the question. The term angel as used in the scriptures, at times, refers to messengers who are sent with some important instruction. Later in this chapter when Jacob said he had beheld the Lord, that did not have reference to his wrestling. (Ibid., pages 16-17)

All revelation since the fall has come through Jesus Christ, who is the Jehovah of the Old Testament. In all of the scriptures, where God is mentioned and where he

has appeared, it was Jehovah who talked with Abraham, with Noah, Enoch, Moses and all the prophets. He is the God of Israel, the Holy One of Israel; the one who led that nation out of Egyptian bondage, and who gave and fulfilled the Law of Moses. The Father has never dealt with man directly and personally since the fall, and he has never appeared except to introduce and bear record of the Son. Thus the Inspired Version records that “no man hath seen God at any time, except he hath borne record of the Son.” (Ibid., page 27)

Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of the Brigham Young University, made these interesting statements in an article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*:

Let me illustrate how some of our young elders in the Church have used the “proof-text” method wrongly, sincere though they may have been. One of the doctrines of our Church is that God the Father has a glorified, resurrected body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s (D. &C. 130:22). Many brethren used Genesis 18:2-8 as a passage to illustrate this truth to prospective converts, because the Lord (so they thought) ate of the meat and cakes provided by Abraham. Only a being like man could eat of the solid food, so they reasoned. Many years ago Dr. James E. Talmage of the Twelve called me into his office and asked what I thought of this common interpretation given by our elders to the Genesis passage. I frankly told him that I disagreed with it, giving my reasons why. In the first place, the whole of Genesis 18 has provided difficulties to Hebrew scholars and should be interpreted with caution. . . .

In the second place, the Hebrew word for Lord in Genesis 18:1 is different from that for “lord” in verse 3, which may simply be a sign of greeting equivalent to “Sir”; and, interestingly, Joseph Smith in his “Inspired” revision has Abraham say to the three men “My brethren” instead of “My lord” as given in our modern translations. A Hebrew scholar can readily understand how an original “My brethren” might be changed by careless writing to “My lord.”

And in the third place, the Jehovah or Lord of Gen. 18:1 who spoke to Abraham was most likely the pre-existent Savior. He it was who spoke to Moses, gave the law, and covenanted with his people Israel (see 3 Nephi 15:4, 6). A pre-existent Savior would not partake of veal and cakes, and as for Elohim the Father, his name is not even mentioned in the Hebrew of Genesis 18. And the “lord” of Gen. 18:3 was probably a mortal being sent with authority from God. So our elders were undoubtedly wrong in their interpretation of the passage in Genesis. It was not right, therefore, to use it in their attempts to prove that God was a being of flesh and bones.

Dr. Talmage told me that he agreed with my reasoning and said that he was going to take what steps he could to discourage our elders in using the passage in the way I have described. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1967, pages 81-82)

One of the changes in the Mormon Apostle Parley P. Pratt’s book, *Key to Theology*, must be related to the matter discussed above. In the original 1855 printing the Apostle Pratt said:

. . . he [Abraham] conversed with angels, and was favored with a personal interview with the Great Head and Founder of the science, who **became his guest, and, after eating and drinking with him**, blessed him and his wife, . . . (*Key to the Science of Theology*, Liverpool, 1855, page 6)

In the 1965 printing of this book ten words—concerning the Lord eating and drinking with Abraham—have been deleted without any indication:

. . . he (Abraham) conversed with angels, and was favored with a personal interview with the Great Head and Founder of the science, who blessed him and his wife. . . .

Although the Mormon leaders are beginning to curtail the use of the Old Testament to prove that God the Father has a body, they still maintain that this doctrine is true.

Since the Mormon Church teaches that God is only an exalted man and that there are many Gods, it has led the Mormon people to the conclusion that God is somewhat limited. The Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde stated that God needs angels and ministers to tell him what is going on:

. . . He knows everything. How? When His angels and ministers tell Him of it, **like any other ruler**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, page 64)

Although the “Lectures on Faith” taught that God is “omnipresent,” Brigham Young, the second President of the Church, denied this doctrine:

Some would have us believe that God is present everywhere. **It is not so**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 6, page 345)

The idea of a plurality of Gods and the idea that God is limited led Brigham Young to the conclusion that there are many redeemers:

Consequently, **every earth has its redeemer**, and every earth has its tempter; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 14, page 71)

Brigham Young also taught that the Mormons themselves would be redeemers:

But I expect, if I am faithful with yourselves, that I shall see the time with yourselves that we shall know how to prepare to organize an earth like this—know how to people that earth, **how to redeem it**, how to sanctify it, and how to glorify it, with those who live upon it who hearken to our counsels. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 6, pages 274-275)

## A Changeable God?

The idea of a progressive God was a natural outgrowth of the Mormon teaching of a plurality of Gods. The Apostle Orson Hyde made this comment:

Remember that God, our heavenly Father, was perhaps once a **child**, and **mortal** like we ourselves, and **rose step by step** in the scale of progress, in the school of advancement; has moved forward and overcome, until He has arrived at the point where He now is. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1, page 123)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made this statement:

We are now, or may be, as perfect in our sphere as God and Angels are in theirs, but **t**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1, page 93)

Wilford Woodruff, who became the fourth President of the Mormon Church, made this statement:

God himself is increasing and progressing in knowledge, power, and dominion, and will do so, worlds without end. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 6, page 120)

This idea of a progressive and changeable God is very different from the concept of God taught in the Bible and Book of Mormon. In Malachi 3:6 we read: “For I am the Lord, I change not; . . .” In the Book of Mormon, Moroni 8:18, we find this statement:

For I know that God is not a partial God, neither a changeable being; but he is unchangeable from all eternity to all eternity.

While Brigham Young and other leaders of the Mormon Church openly rejected the Book of Mormon teaching that God is “unchangeable,” the Apostle Orson Pratt had a difficult time accepting these new teachings. Although he accepted the idea of a plurality of Gods, he did not seem to believe that they progressed in knowledge:

The Father and the Son **do not progress in knowledge** and wisdom, because they already know all things past, present, and to come. . . . Now we wish to be distinctly understood that each of these personal Gods has **equal knowledge with all the rest; there are none among them that are in advance of the others in knowledge**; though some may have been Gods as many millions of years, as there are particles of dust in all the universe, yet there is not one truth that such are in possession of but what every other God knows. **They are all equal in knowledge, and in wisdom, and in the possession of all truth. None of these Gods are progressing in knowledge**; neither can they **progress** in the acquirement of any truth.

98. Some have gone so far as to say that all the Gods were progressing in truth, and would continue to progress to all eternity, and that some were far in advance of others: but let us examine, for a moment, the **absurdity** of such a conjecture. . . . Have we any right to say that there is a boundless ocean of materials, acting under such Superior laws that none of the Gods to all ages of eternity can be able to understand them? We



should like to know what Law Giver gave such superior laws? . . . This is the great **absurdity**, resulting from the vague conjecture that there will be an endless progression in knowledge among all the Gods. Such a conjecture is not only extremely **absurd**, but it is in **direct opposition** to what is revealed.

99. We shall now show from the revelations given through **Joseph**, the **Seer**, that God and his son, Jesus Christ, are in possession of all knowledge, and that is no more truth for them to learn, . . . (*The Seer*, pages 117-118)

Brigham Young openly differed with Orson Pratt on this issue. In a sermon delivered in the Tabernacle on January 13, 1867, Brigham Young stated:

. . . Brother Orson Pratt, has in theory, bounded the capacity of God. According to his theory. God can progress no further in knowledge and power; but the **God that I serve is progressing eternally**, and so are his children: they will **increase** to all eternity, if they are faithful. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, page 286)

J. M. Grant, a member age the First Presidency under Brigham Young, made this statement concerning Orson Pratt's teaching about the Gods:

. . . Orson Pratt lariatied out the Gods in his theory; his circle is as far as the string extends. **My God is not lariatied out**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, page 126)

It is very interesting to note that the Mormon Church is still divided over this issue. Joseph Fielding Smith, who is now President of the Mormon Church, has sided with Orson Pratt, declaring that God does not progress in knowledge:

FALSE NOTIONS ABOUT GOD'S PROGRESSION. It seems very strange to me that members of the Church will hold to the doctrine, "God increases in knowledge as time goes on." . . . Where has the Lord ever revealed to us that he is lacking in knowledge? That he is still learning new truth; discovering new laws that are unknown to him? I think this kind of doctrine is **very dangerous**. . . .

WILL GOD DESTROY HIMSELF? I cannot comprehend God in his perfection having to spend time discovering laws and truth he does not know. Such a thought to me is destructive, not progressive. Should there be truth which God has not discovered, when may he discover it, and, like a chemist who mixes certain elements and blows himself up, when will the Almighty find some hidden truth or law which will shatter all? Is there not a danger that some other personage may discover some greater truth than our Father knows? If such could be the case, what would become of God? (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, pages 7, 8 and 10)

Our Father in heaven is infinite; he is perfect; he possesses **all knowledge and wisdom**. (Ibid., Vol. 2, page 34)

In the 1958 edition age his book, *Mormon Doctrine*, Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy, had some very strong words against those who believe that "God is progressing in knowledge":

Those who falsely and erroneously suppose that God is progressing in knowledge and gaining new truths cannot exercise sufficient faith in him to gain salvation until they divest themselves their false beliefs. (*Mormon Doctrine*, Salt Lake City, 1958, page 493)

This statement by Bruce R. McConkie seems to cast a shadow of doubt upon the salvation of both Brigham Young and Wilford Woodruff, for Young stated that "the God I serve is progressing eternally" and Woodruff said that "God himself is increasing and progressing in knowledge, power and dominion, and will do so, worlds without end." In the second edition of Bruce R. McConkie's book this statement appears to have been deleted. Nevertheless, McConkie still maintains that God is not progressing. On page 239 of the second edition the following statement appears: "It should be realized that God is not progressing in knowledge, truth, virtue, wisdom, or any of the attributes of godliness. He has already gained these things in their fulness."

## The Holy Ghost

One of the most confusing areas of Mormon theology is that dealing with the Holy Ghost. In the Lectures on Faith, published in the first edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* in 1835, it was declared that there were only two personages in the Godhead—the Father and the Son—and that the Holy Spirit is the mind of the Father and the Son:

2 There are **two** personages who constitute the great, matchless, governing and supreme power over all things . . . They are the Father and the Son: The Father being a personage of **spirit**, glory and power: possessing all perfection and fulness: The Son, who was in the bosom the Father a personage of tabernacle, made, or fashioned like unto man, . . . and is called the Son because of the flesh . . . being the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, . . . possessing the same mind with the Father, **which mind is the Holy Spirit**, . . .

Q. How many personages are there in the Godhead?

A. **Two**: the Father and the Son.

Q. How do you prove that there are **two** personages in the Godhead?

A. By the Scriptures. . . .

Q. Do the Father and the Son possess **the same mind**?

A. They do. . . .

Q. What is this **mind**?

A. **The Holy Spirit**. . . .

Q. Do the Father, Son and Holy Spirit constitute the Godhead?

A. They do. . . .

Q. Does the foregoing account of the Godhead lay a sure foundation for the exercise of faith in him unto life and salvation?

A. It does. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 1835 edition, pages 52, 53, 55, 57 and 58; removed from modern editions)

LaMar Petersen gives this interesting information concerning this matter:

The three witnesses to the reality of the Golden Plates, Cowdery, Whitmer, and Harris, subjoined their testimony with, "And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God." This is interpreted today to mean "one in purpose" and not one in person, but this explanation is not harmonious with Cowdery's reference to the Trinity as "an exalted personage" in the *Messenger and Advocate* (Vol. 2, p. 236). The first definitions of the Father and Son as separate personages appeared in Kirtland in the Lectures on Faith, a set of seven theological essays comprising the first seventy-five pages of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. God was identified as a personage of spirit and Christ as a personage of tabernacle, the two possessing the same mind. This common mind was the Holy Spirit, not yet an individual personage. Question No. 3 of the catechism asked: "How many personages are there in the Godhead?" and the answer was "Two."

The incorporeal God of Kirtland became corporeal at Nauvoo: "The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's" (blood not included) and the Holy Ghost was advanced to the status of a personage. (*Problems in Mormon Text*, by LaMar Petersen. Salt Lake City, 1957, pages 16-17)

In 1855 the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt was still not certain whether there was a personal Holy Ghost:

I am inclined to think from some things in the revelations, that there is such a being as a personal Holy Ghost, but it is not set forth as a positive fact, and the Lord has never given me any revelation upon the subject, and consequently I **cannot fully make up my mind** one way or the other. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, page 338)

On another occasion Orson Pratt stated:

In the Book of Covenants, page 45, we are informed that there are two personages besides the Holy Spirit, which constitute the Godhead; but we are not there informed whether the third, called the Holy Spirit **is a personage or not**. (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 1, page 308)

In a pamphlet, which later fell into disrepute, Orson Pratt argued that the Holy Spirit is a fluid substance:

Heat, light, electricity, and all the varied and grand displays of nature, are but the tremblings, the vibrations, the energetic powers of a living, all-pervading, and most wonderful **fluid**, full of wisdom and knowledge, called the **Holy Spirit**.

4.—It has been supposed by some, that the Holy Spirit exists only as a personage in the likeness and form of the personal spirits of the Father and Son, or in the image of the spirits of men which resemble the human tabernacle in shape and magnitude. That such a personal Holy Spirit exists, there can be but little doubt; but to suppose that such a person is alone called the Holy Spirit, or that there is not a widely diffused substance, also called the Holy Spirit, is evidently erroneous, . . . there are many expressions in Scripture which plainly show that the Holy Ghost exists, not only as a person, but as a diffused **fluid substance**. . . . Let it be remembered that the Holy Ghost and Holy Spirit represent the same Holy Substance or **fluid**, being two different names for the same thing. (Pamphlets by Orson Pratt, "The Holy Spirit," page 50)

The Mormon Apostle Parley P. Pratt—Orson Pratt's brother—also taught that the Holy Spirit is a "substance or fluid." In the first edition of his *Key to Theology* he wrote:

Jesus Christ, a little babe like all the rest of us have been, grew to be a man, was filled with a divine substance or fluid, called the Holy Spirit, by which he comprehended and spake the truth in power and authority; and by which he controlled the elements, and imparted health and life to those who were prepared to partake of the same. (*Key to the Science of Theology*, Liverpool, 1855, page 29)

After Parley P. Pratt's death, the Mormon leaders changed this to read:

Jesus Christ, a little babe like all the rest of us have been, grew to be a man, and "received a fulness of the glory of the Father; and he received all Power, both in heaven and on earth; and the glory of the Father was with him, for he dwelt in him." (*Key to the Science of Theology*, 1965 reprint, page 37)

Notice that the Mormon leaders have completely rewritten Parley P. Pratt's statement.

In the fifth chapter of the same book—this chapter is entitled, "Keys to the Mysteries of the Godhead"—Parley P. Pratt did not have anything to say concerning the Holy Ghost. The Mormon leaders, however, filled the vacuum by adding 123 words. Parley P. Pratt had a great deal to say concerning the Holy Spirit (in present-day Mormon theology the Holy Spirit is considered to be separate from the Holy Ghost), but later Mormon leaders evidently did not like what he had to say, for they have deleted hundreds of words. We have marked all of these changes in a book entitled, *Changes in the Key to Theology*.

Today the Mormons teach that the Holy Ghost is an actual personage and that there are three personages in the Godhead. William E. Berrett quoted Joseph F. Smith as saying: "The Holy Ghost is a **personage** of Spirit, he constitutes the **third person** in the Godhead" (*The Restored Church*, page 541). The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated:

The Holy Spirit and Holy Ghost must not be confused. The Holy Spirit or the “light of truth” is the spirit that proceeds from “the presence of God to fill the immensity of space.” . . . The Holy Ghost, on the other hand, is a Personage, the third member of the Godhead, to whom has been committed many important phases of the plan of salvation. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, page 165)

Joseph Fielding Smith, the President of the Mormon Church, made these confusing comments concerning the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Ghost should not be confused with the Spirit which fills the immensity of space and which is everywhere present. This other Spirit is impersonal and has no size, nor dimension; it proceeds forth from the presence of the Father and the Son and is in all things. We should speak of the Holy Ghost as a personage as “he” and this other Spirit as “it,” although when we speak of the power or gift of the Holy Ghost we may properly say “it.” . . . The Holy Ghost, as we are taught in our modern revelation, is the third member in the Godhead and a personage of Spirit. These terms are used synonymously: Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit of Truth, Holy Spirit, Comforter; all having reference to the Holy Ghost. The same terms largely are used in relation to the Spirit of Jesus Christ, also called the Light of Truth, Light of Christ, Spirit of God, and Spirit of the Lord; and yet they are separate and distinct things. We have **a great deal of confusion** because we have not kept that clearly in our minds. . . . This Light of Christ is not a personage. It has no body. **I do not know what it is** as far as substance is concerned; but it fills the immensity of space and emanates from God. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, pages 49, 50 and 52)

Since the Mormon leaders teach that God has a wife, some people have speculated that the Holy Ghost might be the wife of God the Father. Joseph Fielding Smith, however, vigorously opposed such an idea: “The Holy Ghost is not a personage with a body of flesh and bones, and in this respect differs from the Father and the Son. The Holy Ghost is **not a woman**, as some have declared, and therefore is not the mother of Jesus Christ” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 39). The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards makes this statement: “. . . the Holy Ghost is a **male** personage. Note how often Jesus refers to the Holy Ghost as “he” and “him,” in the above quotations. He is a male personage of spirit as was Jesus before he was born of the Virgin Mary” (*A Marvelous Work and A Wonder*, Salt Lake City, 1966, page 118). Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency under Brigham Young, made this statement concerning the Holy Ghost:

Well, let me tell you, the Holy Ghost is a **man**—he is one of the **sons of our Father**, and our God; and he is that man that stood next to Jesus Christ, just as I stand by brother Brigham. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 179)

William E. Berrett gives this information concerning the Holy Ghost: “The Holy Ghost is a person. Unlike the Father and the Son who have bodies of flesh and bone,

the Holy Ghost has **no body** of flesh and bone (that is, of the elements as we know them but is a personage of spirit” (*The Restored Church*, page 540). While the Mormon Church leaders teach that the Holy Ghost does not have a body of flesh and bones, they also teach that it is absolutely essential to have one. In fact, they claim that the devils were denied bodies of flesh and bone as a punishment for their sins. Joseph Fielding Smith stated:

DEVILS DENIED MORTAL BODIES. The punishment of Satan and the third of the hosts of heaven who followed him, was that they were **denied** the privilege of being born into this world and receiving mortal bodies. They did not keep their first estate and were denied the opportunity of eternal progression. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 65)

There is no greater blessing that can come than the blessing of birth. One third of the hosts of heaven, because of **rebellion**, were denied that privilege, and hence they have no bodies of flesh and, bones, that great gift of God. (*Ibid.*, page 116)

Brigham Young related that Joseph B. Nobles once told a Methodist Priest that the Devil was “a being without a body, whereas our God has a body, parts, and passions. The Devil was cursed and sent down from heaven. He has no body of his own; . . .” (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 331).

The Mormon leaders are unable to explain why God the Father should have a body and yet the Holy Ghost be without one. It is claimed that a body is necessary for eternal progression, yet the Mormon Church teaches that the Holy Ghost became a God without one. Milton R. Hunter, of the First Council of the Seventy, states that the “crowning Gospel ordinance requisite for Godhood is celestial marriage, . . . obedience to this law is absolutely necessary in order to obtain the highest exaltation in the Kingdom of God” (*The Gospel Through the Ages*, pages 118-119). According to Mormon theology, then, it would have been impossible for the Holy Ghost to have obtained Godhood, since he had no body with which to obey the law of “celestial marriage.” In a revelation given by Joseph Smith we find this statement: “Broad is the gate, and wide the way that leadeth to the deaths; and many there are that go in thereat, . . .” (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 132, verse 25). Mormon writers explain that these are the ones who have not obeyed the law of “celestial marriage” and who cannot have children in the resurrection. Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy, states: “The opposite of eternal lives is eternal deaths. Those who come up separately and singly in the resurrection and who therefore do not have spirit children eternally are said to inherit ‘the deaths’ (D. & C. 132:16-17, 25)” (*Mormon Doctrine*, Salt Lake City, 1958, page 220). According to this reasoning, the Holy Ghost seems to be on the path that “leadeth to the deaths.”

Some members of the Mormon Church have been concerned whether or not the Holy Ghost will get a body at some future time. Joseph Fielding Smith, however, states that he is not troubled by this matter:

I have never troubled myself about the Holy Ghost whether he will sometime **have a body or not** because it is not in any way essential to my salvation. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 39)

Bruce R. McConkie made this comment about the Holy Ghost:

He is a Personage of Spirit, a Spirit Person, a Spirit Man, . . . In this dispensation, at least, nothing has been revealed as to his origin or destiny; expressions on these matters are both speculative and fruitless. (*Mormon Doctrine*, page 329)

## **No Real Answers**

In his Master's thesis, "The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy," Owen Kendall White, Jr., made these interesting observations concerning the Mormon view of the Godhead:

In contrast, with the sovereign God of Christian orthodoxy and neo-orthodoxy, the Mormon God is finite. This is indicated in the fact that God is not the only reality with necessary existence. That is, He is not the Creator of **all** that is. ("The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy," Master's thesis, University of Utah, June, 1967, page 86)

. . . to the Mormon, God is involved within space and time. He is not the creator of these dimensions. In fact, the possession of a physical body places rather obvious spatial limitations upon God. . . .

The conception of a changing God, a God in the process of "becoming" rather than "being," which deeply permeates Mormon theology illustrates God's temporality, . . . time imposes serious restrictions upon God. . . . God did not always exist as he now is. In other words, God was not always God. He has changed. He has progressed. . . . Joseph Smith taught that "God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret."

. . . Mormonism is not without some confusion on the changeability of God. The problem may partially stem from Joseph Smith's earlier teaching when he took a position similar to orthodox Christianity. (Ibid., pages 91-93)

Thus, Orson F. Whitney, an early Mormon apostle, says that it is God's "superior intelligence that makes Him God," and that the gospel is merely a ladder "of light, of intelligence, of principle" by which men become Gods. . . . it should be apparent that the Mormon God is a heretical departure from traditional Christianity, and the traditional Christian terminology of omnipotence and omniscience are not justifiably applied to the Mormon God. (Ibid., pages 95-96)

. . . Mormonism's traditional emphasis has been on God's humanity rather than his transcendence. In other words, Mormon theology is much more concerned with the similarities between God and man than the differences between them.

This emphasis upon the closeness and similarity of God and man is clearly evident in the Mormon doctrine that God is a person with a physical body. For it is the notion that God has a physical body that leads to Mormon claims that, man is literally, not figuratively, the offspring of God. Through its entire history, Mormonism has employed its extremely anthropomorphic conception of God to illustrate the similarities rather than the differences between God and man. (Ibid., pages 121-122)

In this chapter we have seen how the Mormon concept of God has changed from one God to a plurality of Gods. Mormon leaders claim that all Christians are in a state of apostasy and have lost the true knowledge of the Godhead, yet a careful examination of Mormon teachings concerning the Godhead reveals a serious state of confusion. While Mormonism claims to give all the answers about the Godhead, the honest investigator soon finds that these answers do not solve the real problems and that many of these answers are built upon the sandy foundation of change or falsification.

In the next chapter we will deal with Brigham Young's Adam-God doctrine, which is certainly one of the low points in Mormon theology.

## 11. THE ADAM-GOD DOCTRINE

The Adam-God doctrine was a natural outgrowth of the doctrine of a plurality of Gods. Although this doctrine was not publicly taught until 1852, Adam was held in high esteem at the very beginning of the Mormon Church.

### Falling Upward

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made this statement concerning Adam and Eve:

In Joseph Smith's philosophy of existence Adam and Eve were raised to a foremost place among the children of men, second only to the Savior. Their act was to be acclaimed. They were the greatest figures of the ages. The so-called "fall" became a necessary, **honorable** act in carrying out the plan of the Almighty. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, Salt Lake City, 1951, page 160)

The Book of Mormon contains this statement: "Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy" (Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 2:25). In Joseph Smith's production "The Book of Moses," we read the following:

And in that day Adam blessed God and was filled, and began to prophesy . . . saying: Blessed be the name of God, for because of my transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have joy, and again in the flesh I shall see God.

And Eve, his wife, heard all these things and was glad, saying: Were it not for our transgression, we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Moses 5:10-11)

Bruce R. McConkie, who is a member of the First Council of the Seventy, made this statement concerning Adam: "Adam's great part in the plan of redemption was to fall from the immortal state in which he first existed on earth and thus bring mortality and death into the world" (*Mormon Doctrine*, Salt Lake City, 1966, page 17). On page 133 of the same book, Bruce R. McConkie claims that Adam was the first president of Christ's Church:

"The Church was first organized on earth in the days of Adam, with that great patriarch standing as its first president, the presiding high priest over God's earthly kingdom. The common sectarian notion that the day of Pentecost is the birthday of the Christian Church is a false heresy. . . . The Church or kingdom as organized in the meridian of time by our Lord and his apostolic ministers was a restored Church."

Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became the tenth President of the Church, made these statements concerning Adam's transgression:

The fall of man came as a blessing in disguise. . . . I never speak of the part Eve took in this fall as a sin, nor do I accuse Adam of a sin. . . . it is not always a sin to transgress a law. . . . his transgression was in accordance with law. When he ate, he became subject to death, and therefore he became mortal. This was a transgression of the law, but not a sin in the strict sense, for it was something that Adam and Eve had to do!

I am sure that neither Adam nor Eve looked upon it as a sin, . . .

We can hardly look upon anything resulting in such benefits as being a sin, in the sense in which we consider sin. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, pages 114-115)

Sterling W. Sill, who is an Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles, made these statements:

Some time ago I heard a radio speaker discussing the fall of Adam. He seemed to think that Adam should be held responsible for most of the troubles that are presently plaguing our world. . . .

This old sectarian doctrine, built around the idea of man's natural depravity and weakness inherited from Adam, is at the root of innumerable problems among us. Adam was one of the greatest men who has ever lived upon the earth. . . .

Under Christ Adam yet stands at our head. . . . Adam fell, but he fell in the right direction. He fell toward the goal. . . .

Adam fell, but he **fell upward**. Jesus says to us, "Come up higher." Our greatest need is to raise our standards, the standards of our thinking, and the standards of our living. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, July 31, 1965, page 7)

In his thesis, "The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy," Owen Kendall White, Jr., makes these interesting observations:

Mormonism rejects the notion that man's condition is best described by "depravity." Nowhere within Mormon theology is its optimism concerning man's natural condition more clearly apparent than in this denial of the Christian doctrine of original sin. . . . In contrast with the orthodox Christian notion that the fall resulted in a condition of human depravity, the Mormon view asserts that the fall was a necessary condition for man to realize his ultimate potential. . . . Mormons generally avoid using "sin" to describe Adam's disobedience to God since it seems too extreme for them. . . . to the Mormon the fall is a fall upward rather than downward. It is an important step in the eternal quest of man. In a recent article, Sterling Sill, a contemporary Mormon ecclesiastical official, wrote: "Adam fell, but he fell in the right direction." . . .

A second though perhaps not as important evidence of the Mormon rejection of original sin is found in the status accorded Adam within Mormon angelology. Rather than the view of literalistic Christian orthodoxy where Adam is conceived as the cause of human suffering, the scoundrel who got mankind into this mess, Mormonism holds Adam in very high esteem indeed. . . .

Within Mormon angelology Adam is Michael the Archangel, the Ancient of Days. He assisted in the creation process and will assist in the resurrecting of the dead. He holds positions of importance next to the members of the Godhead. Indeed, Adam was so highly regarded within early Mormonism that Brigham Young elevated him to the status of God. ("The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy," Master's thesis, by Owen Kendall White, Jr., University of Utah, June 1967, pages 101-104)

### **"Our Father And Our God"**

On April 9, 1852, Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, publicly preached the Adam-God doctrine. In this sermon he stated:

Now hear it, O inhabitants of the earth, Jew and Gentile, Saint and sinner! When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him. He helped to make and organize this world. He is Michael, the Arch-angel, the Ancient of Days! about whom holy men have written and spoken—**He is our Father and our God, and the only God with whom we have to do.** Every man upon the earth, professing Christians or non-professing, must hear it, and will know it sooner or later. . . . the earth was organized by three distinct characters, namely, Eloheim, Yahovah, and Michael, these three forming a quorum, as in all heavenly bodies, and in organizing element, perfectly represented in the Deity, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1:50-51)

The fact that the Mormon people understood Brigham Young to mean just what he said concerning Adam being God is verified by articles that appeared in the church's publication, *Millennial Star*. On December 10, 1853, an article entitled, "Adam, the Father and God of the Human Family" appeared in the *Millennial Star*. In this article the following statements are found:

The above sentiment appeared in *Star* No. 48, a little to the surprise of some of its readers: and while the sentiment may have appeared **blasphemous to the ignorant**, it has no doubt given rise to some serious reflections with the more candid and comprehensive mind . . . **Adam is really God! And why not?** (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 15, page 801)

On page 825 of the same volume the following appeared:

It has been said the **Adam is the God and Father of the human family**, and persons are perhaps in fear and great trouble of mind, lest they have to acknowledge him as such in some future day. **For our part we would much rather acknowledge Adam to be our Father, than hunt for another, and take up with the devil.**

In Vol. 17, page 195, of the *Millennial Star* this statement was made:

. . . every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that he is the God of the whole earth. Then will the words of the Prophet Brigham, **when speaking of Adam**, be fully realized—"He is our father and our God and the only God with whom we have to do."

Elder James A. Little made the following statement concerning Brigham Young's Adam-God doctrine:

I believe in the principle of obedience; and if I am told that Adam is our Father and our God, I just believe it. (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 16, page 530)

Under the date of June 8, 1868, the following is recorded in the "Minutes of the School of the Prophets," held in Provo, Utah:

A. F. Mac[Donald] I thought I would speak briefly in relation to Adam being our God—since the year 1853 when the Prest first spoke on this subject. I have frequently endeavored to reconcile what I have read with regard to this matter. I believe what the Pres. says on the subject although it comes in contact with all our tradition—I have not any doubt in my mind but the Adam is our God. Who his God & Father may be I have no knowledge Prest. Kimball spoke on this question recently and very plainly illustrated the character & relationship of our Father & God. . . .

Geo. G. Bywater rose and spoke . . . when I first heard the doctrine of Adam being our Father and God, I was favorably impressed—enjoyed, and hailed it as a new Revelation—It appeared reasonable to me as the

father of our spirits, that he should introduce us here . . . (“Minutes of the School of the Prophets,” Provo, Utah, 1868-1871, pages 38-39 of typed copy at Utah State Historical Society)

Brigham Young’s Adam-God doctrine met with opposition both within and without the Church. In October 1857 he stated:

Some have grumbled because I believe **our God to be so near to us as Father Adam**. There are many who know **that doctrine to be true**. Where was Michael in the creation of this earth? Did he have a mission to the earth? He did. Where was he? In the Grand Council, and performed the mission assigned him there. Now, if it should happen that we have to pay tribute to **Father Adam**, what a humiliating circumstance it would be! Just wait till you pass Joseph Smith; and after Joseph lets you pass him, you will find Peter; and after you pass the Apostles and many of the Prophets, you will find Abraham, . . . and after a while you come to Jesus; and when you at length meet **Father Adam**, how strange it will appear to your present notions. . . . we shall be very glad to see the white locks of **Father Adam**. But those are ideas which do not concern us at present, although it is written in the Bible—“This is eternal life, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, pages 331-332)

On another occasion Brigham Young stated:

Were it not so, you could trace back your history to the **father of our spirits** in the eternal world. . . . He has been earthly, and is of precisely the same species of being that we are. Whether **Adam** is the personage that we should consider our **heavenly Father**, or not is considerable of a mystery to a good many. I do not care for one moment how that is; it is no matter whether we are to consider **him our God, or whether His Father, or His Grandfather**, for in either case we are of one species—of one family—. . . (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, page 217)

That the Adam-God doctrine was causing dissension in the Mormon Church is evident from the articles that appeared in the *Millennial Star*. One article said that some of the officers had not met in council for three years because of the Adam-God doctrine that was declared by Brigham Young:

. . . some of the officers **have not met in council for three years**. They are lacking faith on **one principle**—the last “cat that was let out of the bag.” Polygamy has been got over pretty well, that cloud has vanished away, but **they are troubled about Adam being our Father and God**. There is a very intelligent person investigating our principles, and who has been a great help to the Saints; he has all the works, and can get along very well with everything else but the last “cat,” and as soon as

he can see that clearly, he will become a “Mormon.” I instructed him to write to Liverpool upon it. (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 16, page 482)

An answer to this problem appeared on page 543 of the same volume:

Concerning the item of **doctrine** alluded to by Elder Caffall and others, viz., **that Adam is our Father and God**, I have to say do not trouble yourselves, neither let the Saints be troubled about this matter . . . If, as Elder Caffall remarked, there are those who are waiting at the door of the Church for this **objection** to be removed, tell such, **the Prophet and Apostle Brigham Young has declared it, and it is the word of the Lord**. (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 16, page 543)

In his Master’s thesis, Rodney Turner made these statements:

. . . it is apparent that the doctrine was upsetting the theological equilibrium of some of the membership in England; that it was having a similar effect in America is also true. (“The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology,” Master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, August, 1953, page 12)

The members were puzzled, even alarmed by this shocking new concept. It was contrary to much that they had accepted as truth all their lives. And it was for that very reason that F. D. Richards had counseled the missionaries to help the membership “roll it aside” until it could be incorporated into their faith “without the sound of hammer of [or?] chisel.” (Ibid., page 37)

Joseph Lee Robinson, in his journal and autobiography (the journal the Apostle Richards tried to prevent us from seeing), stated that he feared that the Apostle Orson Pratt would apostatize because of his opposition to the Adam-God doctrine:

Oct. 6th attend Conference, a very interesting Conference, for at this meeting President Brigham Young said thus, that Adam and Eve, were the names of the first man and woman, of every Earth that was ever organized, and that **Adam and Eve were the natural father and mother of every spirit that comes to this planet, or that receives, tabernacles on this planet, consequently we are brothers and sisters, and that Adam was, God our Eternal Father**, this as Brother Heber remarked was letting the cat out of the Bag, and it came to pass, I believed every word . . . our Beloved Brother **Orson Pratt** told me **he did not believe it he said he could prove by the scriptures it was not correct**. I felt very sorry to hear professor, Orson Pratt [t] **feared lest he should apostetize**, . . .

In his thesis, Rodney Turner gives some very interesting information concerning Orson Pratt’s disagreement with Brigham Young:



... according to T.B.H. Stenhouse ... there was one man who did publicly oppose Brigham Young in his views. That man was Orson Pratt ... of the quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Of him Stenhouse writes: "The mass of the Mormon people do not believe in the Adam-deity but of them all, one only, Orson Pratt, has dared to make public protest against that doctrine." ("The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology," page 38)

Stenhouse claimed that Pratt found himself in serious trouble with Brigham Young over this matter, and tells of a meeting held in "Brigham's little office." While Rodney Turner tends to view Stenhouse's story with suspicion, he admits that Brigham Young and Orson Pratt may have disagreed over the Adam-God doctrine:

The Stenhouse reference to an interview between Orson Pratt and Brigham Young in the latter's "little office" is apparently based on fact. According to S. W. Richards, former president of the British Mission, such a meeting did take place on at least one occasion. However, the Richards's statement gives the year as 1856, and not 1863 as Stenhouse indicates. Possibly more than one such meeting took place; in which event there is no real conflict between the two accounts. In the diary of Samuel Whitney Richards we read:

Tues. March 11, 1856  
Evening with the Regency in the Upper Room of the President's Office, examining [*sic*] the spelling for the New Books in the D. Alphabet. A very serious conversation took place between Prest. B. Young and Orson upon doctrine. O. P. was directly opposed to the Prest views and very freely expressed his entire disbelief in them after being told by the President that things were so and so in the name of the Lord. He was firm in the Position that the Prest's word in the name of the Lord, was not the word of the Lord to him. The Prest did not believe that Orson would ever be Adam, to learn by experience the facts discussed, but every other person in the room would if they lived faithful. J. M. Grant, Amasa Lyman, W. Woodruff, Albert Carrington, Elias Smith, & Robt L Cambell were present.

The context of the above entry gives us good reason to believe that doctrine in some way concerning Adam was the cause of the disagreement between President Young and Orson Pratt. The president's remark that he did not believe "that Orson would ever be Adam," obviously "an Adam," would indicate this. ("The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology," pages 40-41)

According to the "Minutes of the School of the Prophets" held in Provo, Utah, the Apostle Lyman as well as Orson Pratt opposed Brigham Young's Adam-God doctrine. Under the date of June 8, 1868, we read:

The doctrine preached by Prest Young for a few years back wherein he says that **Adam is our God—the**

**God we worship**—that most of the people believe this ... Amasa Lyman stumbled on this—he did not believe it—he did not believe in the atonement of Jesus—Orson Pratt has also told the Prest that he does not believe it—this is not the way to act—we should not suffer ourselves to entertain one doubt—we are not accountable on points of Doctrine if the President makes a statement it is not our prerogative to dispute it. ("Minutes of the School of the Prophets," Provo, Utah, 1868-1871, page 38 of typed copy at the Utah State Historical Society)

In spite of the opposition, Brigham Young continued to teach the Adam-God doctrine. In 1873, just a few years before his death, Brigham Young declared:

How much unbelief exists in the minds of the Latter-day Saints in regard to one particular doctrine which I revealed to them, and **which God revealed to me**—namely that **Adam is our Father and God** ... Our Father Adam helped to make this earth, it was created expressly for him ... He brought one of his wives with him. ... We say that Father Adam came here and helped to make the earth. Who is he? He is Michael, ... He was the first man on the earth, and its framer and maker. He with the help of his brethren brought it into existence. Then he said, "I want **my children who are in the spirit world to come and live here**. I once dwelt upon an earth something like this, **in a mortal state**. I was faithful, I received my crown and exaltation. I have the privilege of extending my work, and to its increase there will be no end. **I want my children that were born to me in the spirit world to come here and take tabernacles of flesh that their spirits may have a house**, a tabernacle, or a dwelling place as mine has," and where is the mystery? (Sermon by Brigham Young, printed in the *Deseret News*, June 14, 1873)

There are four important points that should be noted concerning the Adam-God doctrine. They are as follows:

**1. Adam not created of the dust of this earth.** In a sermon delivered in 1852, Brigham Young stated: "When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body ... He helped to make and organize this world" (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 1, page 50). Brigham Young also made these statements:

You believe Adam was made of the dust of this earth. **This I do not believe**, though it is supposed that it is so written in the Bible; but it is not to my understanding. You can write that information to the States, if you please—that I have publicly declared that I do **not** believe that portion of the Bible as the Christian world do. I never did, and I never want to. What is the reason I do not? Because I have come to understanding, and banished from my mind all the baby stories my mother taught me when I was a child. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, page 6)





On April 20, 1856, Brigham Young stated:

Though we have it in history that our father Adam was made of the dust of this earth, and that he knew nothing about God previous to being made here, yet it is not so; and when we learn the truth we shall see and understand that he helped to make this world, and was the chief manager in that operation.

He was the person who brought the animals and the seeds from other planets to this world, and brought a wife with him and stayed here. You may read and believe what you please as to what is found written in the Bible. Adam was made from the dust of **an** earth, but not from the dust of **this** earth. He was made as you and I are made, and no person was ever made upon any other principle. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 3, page 319)

Rodney Turner makes this comment concerning this matter:

Apparently President Young means that Adam was provided with a physical body through the normal pattern of conception, embryonic development, and birth, since that is [the] method by which “you and I are made.” (“The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology,” page 20)

The Mormon Apostle Parley P. Pratt made this very clear in a book published in 1855:

. . . man neither knew himself, from whence he came, nor whither he was bound. At length a Moses came, who knew his God, . . . But they could not receive His heavenly laws, or bide His presence.

Thus the holy man was forced again to veil the past in mystery, and, in the beginning of his history, assign to man an earthly origin.

Man, moulded from the earth, as a brick!

A Woman, manufactured from a rib!

Thus parents still would fain conceal from budding manhood, the mysteries of procreation, or the sources of life’s ever flowing river, by relating some childish tale of new born life, engendered in the hollow trunk of some old tree, or springing with spontaneous growth, like mushrooms, from out the heaps of rubbish. O man! When wilt thou cease to be a child in knowledge?

Man, as we have said, is the offspring of Deity. (*Key to the Science of Theology*, Liverpool, 1855, pages 49- 50)

**2. Adam is the only God with whom we have to do.** Brigham Young stated:

He is our Father and **our God**, and the **only God** with whom we have to do. (*Journal of Discourses*. Vol. 1, page 50)

On February 3, 1861, John D. Lee recorded the following in his journal: “Eving I attendd Prayer meeting & instruct the Saints on the points of Doctrine refered to by the true *Latter-day Saints Herald* & their Bombarding Pres. B. Young for Saying that Adam is **all the God** that we have to do with & to those that know no better, it is

quite a stumbling Block . . .” (*A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee*, Vol. 1, page 293). In the book, *Women of Mormondom*, page 196, we read: “When Brigham Young proclaimed to the nations that **Adam is our Father and God**, and Eve, his partner, the Mother of a world—**both in a mortal and celestial sense—He made the most important revelation ever oracled to the race since the days of Adam himself.**” The reader will also remember that we quoted this statement from the “Minutes of the School of the Prophets,” held in Provo, Utah: “. . . Prest Young . . . says that **Adam is our God—the God we worship**—that most of the people believe this . . .”

**3. Adam is the Father of our spirits.** Brigham Young also taught that Adam was the Father of our spirits. In 1873 he stated: “Father Adam came here and helped to make the earth. . . . Then he said, “I want my children who are in the spirit world to come and live here. . . . I want My children that were born to me in the spirit world to come here and take tabernacles of flesh . . . (*Deseret Evening News*, June 14, 1873).

Joseph Lee Robinson stated that Brigham Young taught that Adam was the father of our spirits. The following appears in his journal and autobiography: “Brigham Young said . . . that **Adam and Eve were the natural father and mother of every spirit that comes to this plannet, or that receives tabernacles on the plannet, . . . and that Adam was God, our eternal Father.**” On page 180 of *Women of Mormondom* we read the following: “**Adam** and Eve are the names of the fathers and mothers of worlds . . . These were father and mother of a world of **spirits who had been born to them in heaven.**”

**4. Adam, the father of Jesus Christ.** Since Brigham Young was teaching that Adam was the father our spirits, it was very easy to teach that Adam was also the father of Jesus. In a discourse delivered April 9, 1852, Brigham Young declared:

When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. He was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. And who is the Father? **He is the first of the human family;** . . . I could tell you much more about this; but were I to tell you the whole truth, **blasphemy would be nothing to it, in the estimation of the superstitious and over-righteous of mankind.** However, **I have told you the truth as far as I have gone.** . . . Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh **by the same character that was in the Garden of Eden**, and who is our Father in Heaven. Now, let all who may hear these doctrines, pause before they make light of them, or treat them with indifference, for **they will prove their salvation or damnation.** (*Journal of Discourses*. Vol. 1, pages 50-51)

John A. Widtsoe, who was a recent Apostle in the Mormon Church, denied that Brigham Young taught that Adam was the Father of Christ:

Brigham Young's much-discussed sermon says that "Jesus was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the Garden of Eden, and who is our Father in heaven." Enemies of the Church, **or stupid people**, reading also that Adam is "our father and our God," have heralded far and wide that the Mormons believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of Adam. (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, 3 vols. in 1, page 56)

It is easy to show that Apostle Widtsoe's statement is false for many good Mormons in Utah held to this view. For instance, Hosea Stout, who was a prominent Mormon, recorded the following in his diary under the date of April 9, 1852:

Another meeting this evening, President B. Young taught that Adam was the **father of Jesus and the only God to us**. That he came to this world in a resurrected body &c more hereafter. (*On the Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, University of Utah Press, 1964, Vol. 2, page 435)

In the *Women of Mormondom* we read as follows:

**Adam is our father and God**. He is the God of the earth. So says Brigham Young . . . He is **the father of our elder brother Jesus Christ**—the father of him who shall also come as Messiah to reign. He is the father of the **spirits** as well as the tabernacles of the sons and daughters of man. Adam! (*Women of Mormondom*, page 179)

Heber C. Kimball, the first councilor to Brigham Young, stated:

I have learned by experience that there is but one God that pertains to this people, and he is the God that pertains to this earth—**the first man. That first man sent his own son to redeem the world**, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, page 1)

George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, seemed to believe that Adam was the father of Christ. His son recorded the following in his journal:

Father [George Q. Cannon] told me . . . In his speaking he had never desired to be sensational but to be sound in doctrine. He asked me what I understood concerning Mary conceiving the Savior; and as I found no answer, he asked what was to prevent **Father Adam** from visiting and overshadowing the mother of Jesus. "Then," said I, "He must have been a resurrected Being." "Yes," said he, "and though Christ is said to have been the first fruits of them that slept, yet the Savior said he did nothing but what He had seen His Father do, for He had power to lay down His life and take it up again. Adam, though made of dust, was made, as Pres. Young said, of the dust of another planet than this." I was very much instructed by

the conversation and this day's services. ("Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon," March 10, 1888, Vol. 10, pages 178-179; original journal at Brigham Young University Library)

Under the date of June 23, 1889, Abraham Cannon recorded that George Q. Cannon taught that "Jesus Christ is Jehovah" and that "Adam is His Father and our God." ("Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon," Vol. 11, page 39)

In 1856 the Mormons published a hymnal which contained a hymn entitled, "We Believe in Our God." This hymn plainly taught that Adam was the father of Christ:

We believe in our God the great Prince of His race,  
The Archangel Michael, the Ancient of Days,  
Our own Father **Adam**, earth's Lord, as is plain.  
Who'll counsel and fight for his children again.

We believe in **His Son**, Jesus Christ, who in love  
To his brethren and sisters, came down from above  
To die to redeem them from death, and to teach  
To mortals and spirits the Gospel we preach.  
(*Sacred Hymns and Spiritual Songs for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Liverpool, 1856, page 375, as quoted in "The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology," page 16)

Rodney Turner states that this hymn "was not included in later editions of the hymnal in England. Nor was the writer able to find it in any hymnal published by the Church in America. Franklin D. Richards must have approved it for publication, since he edited the particular edition in which it is found (*Ibid.*, page 16).

The information given above certainly shows that Brigham Young did teach that Jesus was the son of Adam, and that it was not just "Enemies of the Church, or stupid people" who felt that he taught this doctrine. The most devastating evidence, however, comes from the "Journal of L. John Nuttall." On Wednesday, February 7, 1877, L. John Nuttall recorded in his journal that Brigham Young taught in the Temple that Jesus was the son of Adam. His statement is as follows:

Wed 7 at Temple. I officiated as Recorder at the font—. . . **Prest Young** was filled with the spirit of God & revelation & said, when we got our washings and anointings under the hands of the Prophet Joseph at Nauvoo we had only one room to work in . . . he gave the Key words, togkens (*sic*) and penalties . . . these things of which I have been speaking are what are termed the mysteries of godliness but they will enable you to understand the expression of Jesus made while in Jerusalem. This is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent . . . **Adam** was an immortal being when he came on this earth . . . and had begotten **all the spirits** that was to come to this earth and Eve our common Mother who is the mother of all living bore those spirits in the celestial world . . .

ing of the prospect of a long life as a partial cripple. — At 7:05 p. m. Father, Uncle Angus and I boarded the south-bound train on the D. & A. R. and went to Uncle A's farm where we remained all night. Mina & Aunt Amanda went down there in the afternoon.

Sunday, June 23d, 1889: — Very hot day. — I spent the forenoon in conversing on the Gospel principles and reading. Father proved to my entire satisfaction this morning by passages from the Book of Mormon & Doctrine & Covenants that all men, even the sons of perdition, will be resurrected and stand before God to be judged. He believes that Jesus Christ is Jehovah, and that Adam is His Father and our God; that under certain unknown conditions the benefits of the Savior's atonement extend to our entire solar system. Jesus, in speaking of Himself as the very eternal Father speaks as one of the Godhead, etc. Many obscure points of doctrine were made plain to me by the conversation of this morning. — In the afternoon we administered to Bro. Louis H. Mousley for his hearing, he having become very deaf of late through some unaccountable cause.

At 2 p. m. we went to meeting at Bluffdale. The Ward authorities were presented and sustained after which I spoke for a few moments. Father followed in an excellent discourse on the near approach of the Redeemer, and said that the times of the Gentiles were nearly fulfilled. From Dakota, Michigan, Wisconsin & Minnesota the Elders have been withdrawn because

of the Church, and kingdom of God. — At noon I went with Bro. Duesden to dinner. — In the afternoon Apostle F. D. Richards spoke on the duties of the Saints, and I also spoke for about 25 minutes in a confused way. I fear that I counted too much on my own wisdom in arising to speak, and I felt very much chagrined when I resumed my seat. I hope the lesson will not be lost on me. — As we drove home Father told me that all his success in life was due to his zeal for the work of God. Men gave him credit for much more ability than he possessed, but whatever talents he did possess he had tried to use to the glory of God. In his speaking he had never desired to be sensational but to be sound in doctrine.

He asked me what I understood concerning Mary conceiving the Savior; and as I found no answer, he asked what was to prevent Father Adam from visiting and overshadowing the mother of Jesus. Then said I, "he must have been a resurrected Being." "Yes," said he, "and though Christ is said to have been the first fruits of them that slept, yet the Savior said he did nothing but what He had seen His Father do, for He had power to lay down His life and take it up again. Adam, though made

Father **Adam's oldest son (Jesus the Savior)** who is the heir of the family is **Father Adam's first begotten in the spirit world, who according to the flesh is the only begotten** as it is written. (In his divinity he having gone back into the spirit world, and come **in the spirit to Mary and she conceived** . . .) (Journal of L. John Nuttall, Vol. 1, pages 18-21, taken from a typed copy at the Brigham Young University)

The Mormon writer Rodney Turner seems to be willing to concede that the Nuttall journal probably contains a reliable account of Brigham Young's comments:

There is no legit[i]mate reason to question the general accuracy of this account of Brigham Young's remarks as it appears in the Nuttall journal. . . . As for Nuttall's integrity, the writer can think of no reasonable motive why he would deliberately write something in his private diary, one that has but recently come to public light, which was untrue! For morally, there doesn't seem to be the slightest blemish on Nuttall's character. He held the offices of bishop, stake president, and temple recorder. He acted as private secretary to President John Taylor (1879-1887) and President Wilford Woodruff (1887-1892). . . . He occasionally acted as a clerk in the general conferences of the Church; and in taking of formal notes was considered "extremely reliable." In fact, he was acting as a special secretary to President Young at the time the journal entry in question was made. . . .

There is one thought expressed in the Nuttall journal which merits analysis. It is the explanation of how Adam, who in a state of mortality had many direct offspring, could still be the Father of Christ, who is spoken of as the "Only Begotten" Son of God. Brigham Young implies that Christ is the "only begotten" of Adam "in his divinity." In other words, when Adam begat physical offspring, he did so in a fallen state of mortality which precluded the transfer of "divinity" or immortality to that offspring. But in the case of the Savior, such a transfer of divinity could take place because Adam and Eve, without actually suffering a physical death, had "returned to the spirit world from whence they came" and reassumed their former glory and divinity. Thus, Adam, having regained his divinity and immortality, could, in begetting Christ, declare him to be the "Only Begotten Son". . . ("The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology," Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, August, 1953, pages 33-35)

When the Mormon Church was accused of teaching that "Adam is God . . . and that Jesus is his son" the Mormon historian B. H. Roberts replied:

As a matter of fact, the "Mormon" Church does not teach that doctrine. A few men in the "Mormon" Church have held such views: and several of them **quite prominent in the councils of the church, . . . Brigham Young and others have taught that doctrine, . . .** (*Deseret News*, July 23, 1921)

Joseph Fielding Smith, a member of the First Presidency, is not as willing to admit that "Brigham Young and others may have taught that doctrine." In his book, *Doctrines of Salvation*, he makes this statement:

The statement by President Brigham Young that the Father is the first of the human family is easily explained. But the expression that he was the same character that was in the Garden of Eden has led to misunderstanding because of the implication which our enemies place upon it that it has reference to Adam. **Unfortunately Brigham Young is not here to make his meaning in this regard perfectly clear.** (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 102)

## Confusion and Strife

Brigham Young's Adam-God doctrine has brought much confusion into the Mormon Church. Wilford Woodruff, the fourth President of the Mormon Church, once stated:

Cease troubling yourselves about who God is; who Adam is, who Christ is, who Jehovah is. For heaven's sake, let these things alone . . . God is God. Christ is Christ. The Holy Ghost is the Holy Ghost. That should be enough for you and me to know . . . I say this because we are troubled every little while with inquiries from Elders anxious to know who God is, who Christ is, and **who Adam is. I say to the Elders of Israel, stop this.** (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 57, pages 355-356)

In all fairness to the Mormon Church it should be stated that they no longer teach the Adam-God doctrine, even though some members of the Church still believe it. Anyone who is caught teaching this doctrine is liable to be excommunicated. This, however, shows the inconsistency of the Mormon Church, for they say that Brigham Young was a prophet, and at the same time they will excommunicate a person for believing in his teachings.

Even before the turn of the century the Mormon leaders seemed to be ashamed of the Adam-God doctrine. On November 28, 1898, George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency, stated that Brigham Young had taught some things concerning Adam and Jesus, but they felt it was not "wise to advocate these matters":

I was stopped yesterday afternoon by a young man, who wanted to know whether Adam was the Father of our Lord and Savior—whether he was the being we worshipped, etc. Now, we can get ourselves very easily puzzled, if we choose to do so, by speculating upon doctrines and principles of this character. The Lord has said through His Prophet that there are two personages in the Godhead. That ought to be sufficient for us at the present time. . . . Concerning the doctrine in regard to **Adam and the Savior**, the Prophet Brigham Young taught some things concerning that; but the First Presidency and the twelve **do not think it wise to advocate these matters.** It is sufficient to know we have a Father—God the Eternal Father, who reveals Himself by His Holy Spirit unto those who seek Him; and that Jesus Christ is His Son, our Redeemer, the Savior of the world. (*Proceedings of the First Sunday School Convention of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Salt Lake City, 1899, as quoted in "The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scriptures and Theology," pages 69-70)



Even though the Mormon leaders were trying to put down Brigham Young's Adam-God doctrine, many Mormons continued to believe it. Rodney Turner cites Charles W. Penrose, a member of the First Presidency, as making this statement in 1916:

"There still remains, I can tell by the letters I have alluded to, an idea among some of the people that Adam was and is the Almighty and Eternal God." ("The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scriptures and Theology," page 81)

On the same page of his thesis, Rodney Turner cites Penrose as saying:

"... the notion has taken hold of some of our brethren that Adam is the being that we should worship."

In a letter, dated May 11, 1966, the Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards wrote: "Your third question: 'Is the Adam God Doctrine, as taught in the *Journal of Discourses*, true?' Answer: **No.**" (Letter from LeGrand Richards to Morris L. Reynolds, May 11, 1966). Hugh B. Brown, of the First Presidency, apparently feels Brigham Young was misquoted: "The Adam-God doctrine is not the doctrine of the Church, and the reports on that subject as published in the *Journal of Discourses* are not accurate" (Letter from Hugh B. Brown to Morris L. Reynolds, dated May 13, 1966). Speaking of Brigham Young's first sermon on the Adam-God doctrine, Joseph Fielding Smith, of the First Presidency, states: "... in all probability the sermon was erroneously transcribed!" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 96).

We feel that the claim that Brigham Young was misquoted is completely untrue. Rodney Turner, a Mormon who wrote his thesis for the Mormon-owned Brigham Young University, also feels that it is impossible to maintain such a position:

#### Was Brigham Young Misquoted?

It is the writer's opinion that the answer to this question is a categorical no. There is not the slightest evidence from Brigham Young, or any other source, that either his original remarks on April 9, 1852, or any of his subsequent statements were ever misquoted in the official publications of the Church. . . .

In the light of Brigham Young's attitude toward the errors of others, and in view of the division created by his remarks concerning Adam, it would be stretching one's credulity to the breaking point to believe that he would have remained silent had he been misquoted. To the contrary, we could expect him to be rather watchful of the manner in which his addresses were published in the official organs of the Church. . . .

President Young did not hesitate to cite what he considered to be the false ideas of Orson Pratt by chapter and verse; had erroneous teachings concerning Adam been advanced due to the misquoting of his addresses, Brigham Young would surely have referred to those misquotations at sometime or other—he never did. . . . The complete absence of any real evidence to the contrary obliges the writer to conclude that Brigham Young has not been misquoted in the official publications of the Church. ("The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology," Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, August, 1953, pages 33-35)

On page 58 of the same thesis, Rodney Turner states:

A careful, detached study of his available statements, as found in the official publications of the Church, will admit of no other conclusion than that the identification of Adam with God the Father by President Brigham Young is an irrefutable fact.

We must agree with Rodney Turner. The evidence that Brigham Young taught the Adam-God doctrine is "irrefutable:"

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## 12. THE VIRGIN BIRTH

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, once stated:

Now, remember from this time forth, and forever, that Jesus Christ **was not begotten by the Holy Ghost**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1, page 51)

This statement is in conflict with both the Bible and the Book of Mormon. In Matthew 1:18 and 20 we read:

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, **she was found with child of the Holy Ghost**. . . . for that which is conceived in her **is of the Holy Ghost**.

The Book of Mormon agrees with the Bible on this point, for in Alma 7:10 we read:

And behold, he shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem which is the land of our fore-fathers, she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed and **conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost**, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God.

In spite of these plain statements, Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Church, has denied that the Book of Mormon and the Bible teach that Christ was begotten by the Holy Ghost. He stated as follows:

They tell us the Book of Mormon states that Jesus was begotten of the Holy Ghost. **I challenge that statement**. The Book of Mormon teaches **no such thing! Neither does the Bible**. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 19)

The reason that Joseph Fielding Smith objects to the teaching that Jesus was begotten by the Holy Ghost is that, according to Mormon theology, this would make Jesus the son of the Holy Ghost rather than the Son of God. This idea arises from an improper understanding of the term Holy Ghost. The term Holy Ghost means exactly the same as the term Holy Spirit. The *American College Dictionary* defines the term "Holy Spirit" as "the Holy Ghost." Now, the Bible tells us that God is a Spirit, and that he is holy; therefore, God himself must be the Holy Spirit. So we see that there is no contradiction in

saying that Jesus was begotten by the Holy Ghost and also is the Son of God.

Since Mormon theology teaches that God himself is a man instead of a spirit and is the literal father of Christ, the birth of Christ is considered a natural, rather than miraculous, occurrence. Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr., stated:

The birth of the Savior was a **natural**, occurrence unattended with any degree of mysticism, and the Father God was the **literal parent** of Jesus in the **flesh** as well as in the spirit. (*Religious Truths Defined*, page 44)

Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the Mormon Church, made this statement:

Christ was begotten of God. **He was not born without the aid of man, and that man was God!** (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Salt Lake City, 1959, Vol. 1, page 18)

Bruce R. McConkie, who is a member of the First Council of the Seventy, makes the following statements concerning this matter:

These name-titles all signify that our Lord is the only Son of the Father in the flesh. Each of the words is to be understood literally. Only means only; Begotten means begotten; and Son means son. Christ was begotten by an Immortal Father in the same way that mortal men are begotten by mortal fathers. (*Mormon Doctrine*, Salt Lake City, 1966, pages 546-547)

And Christ was born into the world as the literal Son of this Holy Being; he was born in the same personal, real, and literal sense that any mortal son is born to a mortal father. There is nothing figurative about his paternity; he was begotten, conceived and born in the normal and natural course of events. . . . Christ is the Son of Man, meaning that his Father (the Eternal God) is a Holy Man. (*Ibid.*, page 742)

The Mormon writer Carlfred B. Broderick made these comments:

There are two basic elements in the Gospel view of sexuality as I interpret it from the scriptures. The first is that sex is good—that sexuality, far from being the antithesis of spirituality, is actually an attribute of God. . . .

In the light of their understanding that God is a procreating personage of flesh and bone, latter-day prophets have made it clear that despite what it says in Matthew 1:20, the Holy Ghost was not the father of Jesus. . . . The Savior was fathered by a personage of flesh and bone, and was literally what Nephi said he was, "Son of the Eternal Father." (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn, 1967, pages 100-101)

Brigham Young, second President of the Mormon Church, had this to say concerning the birth of Christ:

The man Joseph, the husband of Mary, did not, that we know of, have more than one wife, **but Mary the wife of Joseph had another husband.** (*Deseret News*, October 10, 1866)

This same type of reasoning led the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt to say:

The fleshly body of Jesus required a Mother as well as a Father. Therefore, the Father and Mother of Jesus, according to the flesh, must have been **associated together in the capacity of husband and wife**; hence the Virgin Mary must have been, for the time being, the lawful **wife of God the Father**: we use the term lawful Wife, because it would be blasphemous in the highest degree to say that He overshadowed her or begat the Saviour unlawfully. It would have been unlawful for any man to have interfered with Mary, who was already espoused to Joseph; for such a heinous crime would have subjected both the guilty parties to death, according to the law of Moses. But God having created all men and women, had the most perfect right to do with His own creation, according to His holy will and pleasure: He had a lawful right to overshadow the Virgin Mary in the **capacity of a husband**, and beget a Son, although she was espoused to another; for the law which He gave to govern men and women was not intended to govern Himself, or to prescribe rules for his own conduct. It was also lawful in Him, after having thus dealt with Mary, to give her to Joseph her espoused husband. Whether God the Father gave Mary to Joseph for time only, or for time and eternity, we are not informed. Inasmuch as **God was the first husband to her**, it maybe that He only gave her to be the wife of Joseph while in this mortal state, and that He intended after the resurrection to again take her as **one of his own wives** to raise up immortal spirits in eternity. (*The Seer*, page 158; see photo in next column)

Brigham Young explained the birth of Christ as follows:

The birth of the Saviour was as natural as are the births of our children; it was the result of natural action. He partook of flesh and blood—was begotten of his Father, as we were of our fathers. (*Journal of Discourses*. Vol. 8, page 115)

Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, made this statement:

In relation to the way in which I look upon the works of God and his creatures, I will say that I was naturally begotten; so was my father, and also **my Saviour Jesus Christ**. According to the Scriptures, he is the first begotten of his father in the flesh, and there was **nothing unnatural about it.** (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 8, page 211)

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CELESTIAL MARRIAGE.

pure, and sublime attributes which are perfected in all their fulness in themselves.

If none but Gods will be permitted to multiply immortal children, it follows that each God must have one or more wives. God, the Father of our spirits, became the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh. Hence, the Father saith concerning him, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." We are informed in the first chapter of Luke, that Mary was chosen by the Father as a choice virgin, through whom He begat Jesus. The angel said unto the Virgin Mary, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore, also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." After the power of the Highest had overshadowed Mary, and she had by that means conceived, she related the circumstance to her cousin Elizabeth in the following words: "He that is Mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name." It seems from this relation that the Holy Ghost accompanied "the Highest" when He overshadowed the Virgin Mary and begat Jesus; and from this circumstance some have supposed that the body of Jesus was begotten of the Holy Ghost without the instrumentality of the immediate presence of the Father. There is no doubt that the Holy Ghost came upon Mary to sanctify her, and make her holy, and prepare her to endure the glorious presence of "the Highest," that when "He" should "overshadow" her she might conceive, being filled with the Holy Ghost; hence the angel said, as recorded in Matthew, "That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost;" that is, the Holy Ghost gave her strength to abide the presence of the Father without being consumed; but it was the personage of the Father who begat the body of Jesus; and for this reason Jesus is called "the Only Begotten of the Father;" that is, the only one in this world whose fleshly body was begotten by the Father. There were millions of sons

and daughters whom He begat before the foundation of this world, but they were spirits, and not bodies of flesh and bones; whereas, both the spirit and body of Jesus were begotten by the Father—the spirit having been begotten in heaven many ages before the tabernacle was begotten upon the earth.

The fleshly body of Jesus required a Mother as well as a Father. Therefore, the Father and Mother of Jesus, according to the flesh, must have been associated together in the capacity of Husband and Wife; hence the Virgin Mary must have been, for the time being, the **lawful wife of God the Father**: we use the term **lawful Wife**, because it would be blasphemous in the highest degree to say that He overshadowed her or begat the Saviour unlawfully. It would have been unlawful for any man to have interfered with Mary, who was already espoused to Joseph; for such a heinous crime would have subjected both the guilty parties to death, according to the law of Moses. But God having created all men and women, had the most perfect right to do with His own creation, according to His holy will and pleasure: He had a lawful right to overshadow the Virgin Mary in the capacity of a husband, and beget a Son, although she was espoused to another; for the law which He gave to govern men and women was not intended to govern Himself, or to prescribe rules for his own conduct. It was also lawful in Him, after having thus dealt with Mary, to give her to Joseph her espoused husband. Whether God the Father gave Mary to Joseph for time only, or for time and eternity, we are not informed. Inasmuch as God was the first husband to her, it may be that He only gave her to be the wife of Joseph while in this mortal state, and that He intended after the resurrection to again take her as one of his own wives to raise up immortal spirits in eternity.

As God the Father begat the fleshly body of Jesus, so He, before the world began, begat his spirit. As the body required an earthly Mother, so his

A photograph of *The Seer*, page 158. The Apostle Orson Pratt states that Mary and God the Father associated together in the capacity of Husband and Wife.

In a sermon delivered in the Tabernacle on April 9, 1852, Brigham Young made the following statements:

I have given you a few leading items upon this subject, but a great deal more remains to be told. Now remember from this time forth, and forever, that **Jesus Christ was not begotten by the Holy Ghost**. I will repeat a little anecdote. I was in conversation with a certain learned professor upon the subject, when I replied, to this idea—"if the Son was begotten by the Holy Ghost, it would be **very dangerous to baptize and confirm females, and give the Holy Ghost to them, lest he should beget children to be palmed upon the Elders by the people, bringing the Elders into great difficulties.**" (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1, page 51)

## **Conclusion**

The Mormon Church leaders have taught that Jesus Christ "was begotten by the Holy Ghost"; they have also stated that "Mary the wife of Joseph had another husband"; and that was "God the Father." They have also taught that Mary and God the Father "associated together in the capacity of husband and wife," and that there was "nothing unnatural about" the way Christ was begotten.

A careful examination of this teaching reveals that it is far closer to paganism than it is to Christianity!

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## 13. ARM OF FLESH

In Jeremiah 17:5 we read: “Thus saith the Lord; cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, . . .” This scripture means that we are not to put our trust in any man, but that we are to rely only upon God and put our trust in Him. Men can lead us into error, but God leads us only into truth and righteousness.

The Mormon Church condemns the Catholic Church for teaching that the Pope is infallible. Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr., made this statement concerning the Catholic teaching of infallibility:

This dogma sets forth the belief that the “Vicar of Christ” cannot teach error because he is promised divine protection from error . . . infallibility is a fabrication devised by **the powers of darkness** to act as a counterfeit for revelation. (*Religious Truths Defined*, page 183)

While the Mormon Church leaders condemn the Catholics for teaching the doctrine of infallibility, they teach essentially the same thing. Brigham Young once stated:

The Lord Almighty leads this Church, and he will **never** suffer you to be led astray if you are found doing your duty. You may go home and **sleep as sweetly as a babe in its mother’s arms, as to any danger of your leaders leading you astray**, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 9, page 289)

Wilford Woodruff, the fourth President of the Church, stated: “The Lord will **never permit** me or any other man who stands as the President of this Church to lead you astray. **It is not in the program**” (*Essentials in Church History*, page 609). Joseph Fielding Smith, recently became the tenth President of the Church, once stated:

The time will never come when we will not be able to put confidence and exercise faith in the teachings and in the instruction of those who lead us . . . Therefore it behooves us, as Latter-day Saints, **to put our trust in the presiding authorities of the church**. . . .

SAINTS SAFE IN FOLLOWING CHURCH AUTHORITIES. No man ever went astray by following the counsel of the authorities of the Church. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, page 243)

### Thinking a Sin?

The doctrine that the leaders of the Mormon Church are infallible was certainly taught in the ward teacher’s message for June 1945:

Any Latter-day Saint who denounces or opposes, whether actively or otherwise, any plan or doctrine advocated by the “prophets, seers, and revelators” of the Church is cultivating the spirit of apostasy. . . .

It should be remembered that Lucifer has a very cunning way of convincing unsuspecting souls that the General Authorities of the Church are as likely to be wrong as they are to be right. . . . He wins a great victory when he can get members of the Church to speak against their leaders and to “do their own thinking.” . . .

**When our leaders speak, the thinking has been done. When they propose a plan—it is God’s plan. When they point the way, there is no other which is safe. When they give direction, it should mark the end of controversy.** (*Improvement Era*, June 1945, page 354)

Heber C. Kimball, First Councilor to Brigham Young, made these statements:

When brother Joseph Smith lived, he was our Prophet, our Seer, and Revelator; **he was our dictator** in the things of God, and it was for us to listen to him, and do just as he told us. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, page 106)

Am I afraid to risk my salvation in the hands of the man that is appointed to lead me, and to lead this people? **No**, no more than I am to trust myself in the hands of the Almighty. (*Ibid.*, Vol. 4, page 46)

On September 6, 1857, Thomas B. Marsh declared that the president of the Mormon Church is in reality a Pope:

I have now got a better understanding of the Presidency of the Church than I formerly had. I used to ask myself, What is the difference between the President of our Church and a Pope? True, he is not called a Pope, but names do not alter realities, and therefore **he is a Pope**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 208)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

Have we not a right to make up our minds in relation to the things recorded in the word of God, and speak about them, whether the living oracles believe our views or not? **We have not the right.** . . .

God placed Joseph Smith at the head of this Church; God has likewise placed Brigham Young at the head of this Church; . . . We are commanded to give heed to their words in **all** things, **and receive their words as from the mouth of God**, in all patience and faith. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 7, pages 374-375)

Wilford Woodruff, who later became President of the Church, stated:

Now, whatever I might have obtained in the shape of learning, by searching and study respecting the arts and sciences of men,—whatever principles I may have imbibed during my scientific researches, yet, if the Prophet of God should tell me that a certain principle or theory which I might have learned was not true, I do not care what my ideas might have been, I should consider it my duty, **at the suggestion of my file leader, to abandon that principle or theory.** (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 83)

Joseph Smith himself once stated:

God made Aaron to be the mouthpiece for the children of Israel, and He will make **me to be God to you in His stead**, and the Elders to be mouth for me; and **if you don't like it, you must lump it.** (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, page 363; also found in *History of the Church*, Vol. 6, pages 319-320)

## No Revelation

Although the Mormon Church claims to be led by revelation, Joseph F. Smith, the sixth President of the Mormon Church, testified as follows in the *Reed Smoot Investigation*:

Senator Dubois.—Have you received any revelations from God, which has been submitted by you and the apostles to the body of the church in their semiannual conference, which revelation has been sustained by that conference, through the upholding of their hands?

Mr. Smith.—Since when?

Senator Dubois.—Since you became President of the Church.

Mr. Smith.—**No, sir; none whatever.**

Senator Dubois.—Have you received any individual revelations yourself, since you became President of the church under your own definition, even, of a revelation?

Mr. Smith.—**I cannot say that I have.**

Senator Dubois.—Can you say that you have not?

Mr. Smith.—No; I cannot say that I have not.

Senator Dubois.—Then you do not know whether you have received any such revelation as you have described or whether you have not?

Mr. Smith.—Well, I can say this: That if I live as I should in the line of my duties, **I am susceptible, I think**, of the impressions of the Spirit of the Lord upon my mind at any time, **just as any good Methodist**, or any other good church member might be. And so far as that is concerned. I say yes; I have had impressions of the Spirit upon my mind very frequently, but they **are not in the sense of revelations.** (*Reed Smoot Case*, Vol. 1, pages 483-484)

On page 99 of the same volume Joseph F. Smith stated: “Mr. Smith. **I have never pretended to nor do I profess to have received revelations.**” From this it is plain to see that just because a man is ordained a “Prophet, Seer, and Revelator, it does not necessarily mean that he is. If Joseph F. Smith was only as susceptible to the impressions of the Spirit of the Lord as “any good Methodist,” then why should his word be trusted above that of a good Methodist?

Although the Mormon Church is supposed to be led by revelation, the evidence of this revelation is very hard to find. The Manifesto of 1890 is the last revelation, if it can be termed a revelation, that has been added to the *Doctrine and Covenants*. So we see that the last revelation that was added to the *Doctrine and Covenants* is eighty years old. Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of Seventy, admits that there is not much written revelation in the Church today, but he still maintains that the Church leaders are receiving “daily revelation”:

It is true that not many revelations containing doctrinal principles are now being written, because all we are as yet capable and worthy to receive has already been written. But the Spirit is giving direct and daily revelation to the presiding Brethren in the administration of the affairs of the Church. . . .

President Wilford Woodruff said: “Where are the revelations of President Young? Do you find them on record? Only a few; but the Holy Ghost and the revelations of God were with Brigham Young . . . There was no necessity particularly for Brigham Young to give written revelation, only in a few instances. So with John Taylor. So with Wilford Woodruff. And so in a great measure probably with all who may follow us, until the coming of the Son of Man. . . .” (*Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, pages 55-56)

The presence of revelation in the Church is positive proof that it is the kingdom of God on earth. (*Mormon Doctrine*, Salt Lake City, 1966, page 650)

We are told that revelation is found in the Conferences of the Church, when the leaders of the Church speak under the inspiration of the Lord, but how can we know when they are speaking under the Spirit of the Lord? Obviously, much of what has been said at the conferences of the church down through the years was not spoken under the inspiration of the Lord. If a leader of the Church were to stand up in conference today and say the same things that Brigham Young said, he would stand the chance of being excommunicated from the Church, yet it was Brigham Young himself who stated:

I have never yet preached a sermon and sent it out to the children of men, that **they may not call scripture**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 13, page 95)

In a letter to Morris L. Reynolds, the Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards made the following statement:

Your next question: "Can the *Journal of Discourses* be used as doctrine if the man speaking says, "Thus saith the Lord?"

I cannot answer that question because I don't know what part of the *Journal of Discourses* you have in mind. I would have to know just what you were referring to. (Letter from LeGrand Richards to Morris L. Reynolds, dated May 16, 1966)

The search for revelation, that is, present day revelation, in Mormonism is really in vain. As we have pointed out, no new revelations have been added to the *Doctrine and Covenants*. The last revelation added is 80 years old. The sermons given in conference may be considered as scripture today, but 50 years from now they may be rejected as many of Brigham Young's sermons are today.

Even though the leaders of the Church are supposed to be led by revelation, it is evident that they are not always in harmony as to which doctrines are from the Lord. Brigham Young once stated that there were Apostles in the Mormon Church who taught that there was no personage called God, that Jesus was not the Savior and that the spirits of some who lived formerly have been reincarnated:

... and yet right here in the **Quorum of the Twelve**, if you ask one of its members what he believes with regard to Deity, he will tell you that he believes in those great and holy principles which seem to be exhibited to man for his perfection and enjoyment in time and in eternity. But do you believe in the existence of a personage called **God**? "No, **I do not**, says this **Apostle**. So you see there are **schisms** in our day. . . .

We have another one in the Quorum of the Twelve who believes that infants actually **have the spirits of some who have formerly lived on the earth**, and that this is their resurrection. . . . This is not all, we have another one of these **Apostles, right in the Quorum of the Twelve**, who, I understand, for **fifteen years**, has been preaching on the sly in the chimney corner to the brethren and sisters with whom he has had influence, that the Savior was **nothing more** than a good man, and **that his death had nothing to do with your salvation or mine**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 12, page 66)

It has been admitted that even Joseph Smith did not always speak under the inspiration of the Lord. He once stated that children would not grow after the resurrection:

But as the child dies, so shall it rise from the dead, . . . It **will never grow**: it will still be the child, in the same precise form as it appeared before it died . . . Children dwell in the mansions of glory and exercise power, but appear in the same form as when on earth. Eternity is full of thrones, upon which dwell thousands of **children** reigning on thrones of glory, with **not one cubit added to**

**their stature**. (A Discourse, by Joseph Smith, delivered at the Conference held near the Temple, Nauvoo, April 6, 1844, reported in *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 6, page 10)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt suggested that Joseph Smith had not been instructed by revelation when he spoke on this subject:

There is a sermon of the Prophet Joseph Smith, reported by long-hand reporters, in which it is stated that resurrected infants will **for ever remain infants**. But I doubt very much in my own mind, if those who reported that sermon got the full idea on this subject; and if they did, I very much doubt **whether the Prophet Joseph**, at the time he preached that sermon, had been **fully instructed by revelation** on that point, . . . So in regard to the resurrection, there may have been many things revealed to him that were true, and others upon which, without having revelation, he would draw **his own conclusions**, until it should please the Lord to give further revelation. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 16, page 335)

In a lecture read in the Logan Temple on June 2, 1888, Joseph E. Taylor disagreed with the Apostle Orson Pratt. After quoting Joseph Smith's statement that children will never grow in heaven, he stated:

These sentiments have never to my knowledge been flatly contradicted; but they have been most severely criticised at times in private circles. To all the criticisms that I have heard I have one reply to make, which is, that if ever Joseph was inspired by God, he certainly was at that time. . . .

A few minutes previous to his speaking upon the condition of children after the resurrection he said concerning Brother Follett: "I am authorized to say by the **authority of the Holy Ghost** that you have no occasion to fear, for he is gone to the Home of the just, etc." Did Joseph at this particular moment have the Holy Ghost; and the next moment lose it, insomuch that his next utterance was an error? **I dare not assume such a position**. . . .

Four brethren reported this sermon, . . . In comparing notes so serious, an error—had it been one—would certainly have been discovered. . . . several persons who were present on that occasion have testified to me that **Joseph did** utter the sentiment I have quoted upon that particular occasion; and I am certainly not in the wrong in endeavoring to sustain God's prophet. (*Deseret Weekly News*, December 29, 1888, page 25)

Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became President of the Church, seems to reject Joseph Smith's teaching with regard to this matter. He stated:

When a child is raised in the resurrection, the spirit will enter the body and the body will be the same size as it was when the child died. It will then **grow** after the resurrection to full maturity to conform to the size of the spirit. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, page 56)

Thus we see that even the Mormons have a hard time determining when Joseph Smith was speaking as a mere man and when he was speaking as a Prophet of the Lord.

Truly, the "arm of flesh" is a dangerous thing to rely upon.



## 14. FALSE PROPHECY

At the time Joseph Smith established the Mormon Church, some people believed that the sun and the moon were habitable globes. The Protestant writer Adam Clarke made this observation:

On the nature of the sun there have been various conjectures . . . Dr. Herschel's discoveries by means of his immensely magnifying telescopes, have, by the general consent of philosophers, added a new **habitable world** to our system, which is the **sun**. . . .

There is scarcely any doubt now remaining in the philosophical world that the **moon is a habitable globe**. The most accurate observations that have been made with the most powerful telescopes have confirmed the opinion. (*Clarke's Commentary*, Vol. 1, page 36)

Josiah Priest believed that the moon has "rivers, creeks, lakes and small seas" and that it is "doubtless filled with animals,—consequently with rational beings in the form of men, as ourselves, for we can conceive of none other, as fitted to preside over its animals. The same we believe of all the stars of heaven" (*American Antiquities and Discoveries in the West*, Albany, N.Y., 1835, page 396).

Today, we look at these statements and smile, for we realize that Adam Clarke and Josiah Priest were influenced by the views of their time. The Mormon leaders were also influenced by these views. Brigham Young, the second President of the Church, stated:

Who can tell us of the **inhabitants** of this little planet that shines of an evening, called the **moon**? When we view its face we may see what is termed "the man in the moon," and what some philosophers declare are the shadows of mountains. But these sayings are very vague, and amount to nothing; and when you inquire about the **inhabitants** of that sphere you find that the most learned are as ignorant in regard to them as the most ignorant of their fellows. So it is in regard to the **inhabitants of the sun**. Do you think it is inhabited? I rather think it is. Do you think there is any life there? No question of it; it was not made in vain. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 13, page 271)

On May 14, 1876, Charles Walker recorded in his journal that Brigham Young taught that "the Sun was inhabited and God dwelled in the midst of Eternal

Burnings" ("Diary of Charles L. Walker," typed excerpts, page 30). The Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith went so far as to describe the inhabitants of the moon. In the journal of Oliver B. Huntington we find the following:

### INHABITANTS OF THE MOON

The **inhabitants of the moon** are more of a uniform size than the inhabitants of the earth, being about 6 feet in height.

They dress very much like the quaker style and are quite general in style, or the fashion of dress.

They live to be very old; coming generally, near a thousand years.

This is the description of them as **given by Joseph the Seer**, and he could "See" whatever he asked the father in the name of Jesus to see. ("Journal of Oliver B. Huntington," Vol. 3, page 166 of typed copy at Utah State Historical Society)

It should be noted that there is a difference between Adam Clarke's suggestion that the moon is a habitable globe and Joseph Smith's description of the inhabitants. Adam Clarke claimed that he received his information from the science of his time. Joseph Smith, on the other hand, claimed that he received his information by revelation from God. We can overlook Adam Clarke's statement and enjoy the rest of his *Commentary*. In Clarke's time astronauts had not landed on the moon and telescopes were not as powerful as the ones we have today. Adam Clarke can be forgiven for making a mistake that any one of us could have made if placed in similar circumstances. Joseph Smith's statement, however, can not be as easily overlooked. His information was supposed to have come from God, and a revelation given in Joseph Smith's day should be as reliable today as it was then. As we examine the history of the Mormon Church we find many revelations given by the Mormon Church leaders that did not come to pass.

### The Canadian Revelation

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, tells of a false revelation that Joseph Smith gave when the Book of Mormon was in the hands of the printer:

In June 1829, the translation of the Book of Mormon was finished. God gave it to us as his Holy Word, and left us as men to work out our own salvation and set in order the Church of Christ according to the written word. He left us as men to receive of His Spirit as we walked worthy to receive it; and his Spirit guides men into all truth; but the spirit of man guides man into error. When God had given the Book of Mormon, and a few revelations in 1829 by the same means that the Book was translated, commanding us to rely upon the written word in establishing the church. He did His part; and left us to do our part and to be guided by the Holy Ghost as we walked worthy to receive. God works with men according to His divine wisdom and justice. He works with men only according to their faith and obedience. He has unchangeable spiritual laws which he cannot break; and he could not be so merciful as to give more of His Spirit to any man, than that man was worthy to receive by his faith and obedience.

In the beginning we walked humble and worthy to receive a great portion of the Spirit of God, . . . but we soon began to drift into errors. . . .

When the Book of Mormon was in the hands of the printer, more money was needed to finish the printing of it. We were waiting on Martin Harris who was doing his best to sell a part of his farm, in order to raise the necessary funds. After a time Hyrum Smith and others began to get impatient, thinking that Martin Harris was too slow and under transgression for not selling his land at once, even if at a great sacrifice. Brother Hyrum thought they should not wait any longer on Martin Harris, and that the money should be raised in some other way. Brother Hyrum was vexed with Brother Martin, and thought they should get the money by some means outside of him, and not let him have anything to do with the publication of the Book, or receiving any of the profits thereof . . . He was wrong in thus judging Bro. Martin, because he was doing all he could toward selling his land. Brother Hyrum said it had been suggested to him that some of the brethren might go to Toronto Canada, and sell the copy-right of the Book of Mormon for considerable money: and he persuaded Joseph to inquire of the Lord about it. Joseph concluded to do so. He had not yet given up the stone. Joseph looked into the hat in which he placed the stone, and received a revelation that some of the brethren should go to Toronto, Canada, and that they would **sell the copy-right of the Book of Mormon**. Hiram Page and Oliver Cowdery went to Toronto on this mission, but **they failed** entirely to sell the copy-right, returning without any money. Joseph was at my father's house when they returned. I was there also, and am an eye witness to these facts. Jacob Whitmer and John Whitmer were also present when Hiram Page and Oliver Cowdery returned from Canada. Well, we were all in great trouble; and we asked Joseph how it was that he had received a revelation from the Lord, for some brethren to go to Toronto and sell the copy-right, and the brethren had utterly failed in their undertaking. Joseph did not know how it was, so he enquired of the Lord about it, and behold the following revelation came through the stone: "Some revelations are of God: some revelations are of man: and some revelations are of the devil." So we see that the revelation to go to Toronto and sell the copy-right was not of God, but was of the devil or the heart of man. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, Richmond, Missouri, 1887, pages 30-31)

Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became President of the Church, was apparently referring to this episode in a press conference in Salt Lake City:

President Smith said he believed, as did LDS Church founder Joseph Smith, that there are three kinds of revelations [*sic*]: "revelations from God, from man and from the devil." (*Salt Lake Tribune*, January 25, 1970)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made these comments concerning this matter:

. . . our knowledge of the "Toronto Journey Incident" rests chiefly upon the testimony of David Whitmer, and the possibility is suggested of his misapprehending some detail of the matter, which might, if accurately known, put the incident in an entirely new light. That, however, is but conjecture; and while the possibility and even probability of misapprehension by Whitmer is great, still the incident must be considered as it is presented by him, since his testimony may not be set aside.

In that view of the case we have here an alleged revelation received by the Prophet, through the "Seer Stone," directing or allowing men to go on a mission to Canada, which fails of its purpose; namely, the sale of the copyright of the Book of Mormon in Canada. Then in explanation of the failure of that revelation, the Prophet's announcement that all revelations are not of God; some are of men and some even from evil sources. The question presented by this state of facts is: May this Toronto incident and the Prophet's explanation be accepted and faith still be maintained in him, as an inspired man, a Prophet of God? I answer unhesitatingly in the affirmative. The revelation respecting the Toronto journey was **not of God**, surely; else it would not have failed; but the Prophet, overwrought in his deep anxiety for the progress of the work, saw reflected in the "Seer Stone" **his own thought**, or that suggested to him by his brother Hyrum, rather than the thought of God. . . . in this instance of the Toronto journey, Joseph was evidently **not** directed by the inspiration of the Lord. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, Vol. 1, pages 164-165)

In his book, *Mormon Portraits*, Dr. Wyl prints a letter from "Mr. Traugher." We take the following statements from this letter:

Early in 1830 . . . Joe delivered a whooping big revelation directing Oliver Cowdery and Hiram Page to go over into Kingston, Canada, and sell a copyright under that Dominion, and thus get money to pay the printer and let Martin go—be independent of him. . . . the boys . . . came back nearly starved, completely wearied, with no money nor copyright sold either. In 1831, when Joe and Sidney were talking about having the revelations published, David Whitmer got up in the council and said all he could against the measure. But Joe raved and declared that the Revelations should be published. David said, "Brother Joseph, are you going to publish all of them?" Joe replied, "yes, all, in the order of their dates." Then David asked, "are you going to publish that revelation for Oliver and Hiram to go to Kingston and get out a copyright for the Book of Mormon?" Joe hung his head a while, then answered, "No." "Why not, Brother Joseph?" asked honest David. "Because," replied Joe, "It was not true." I have this from both Dr. W. E. McLellin (apostle and apostate) and David Whitmer, both of whom have read the revelation. (*Mormon Portraits*, 1886, page 311)

David Whitmer states that there were other revelations given by Joseph Smith which were not printed:

I will say here, that I could tell you **other false revelations** that came through Brother Joseph as mouthpiece, (not through the stone) but this will suffice. **Many of Brother Joseph's revelations were never printed. The revelation to go to Canada was written down on paper, but was never printed.** (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, page 31)

Brigham Young confirmed the fact that some of Joseph Smith's revelations were not published:

Brother Hyde spoke of a revelation which he tried to find in the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*. That revelation was reserved at the time the compilation for that book was made by Oliver Cowdery and others, in Kirtland. It was not wisdom to publish it to the world, and it remained in the private *escritoire*. Brother Joseph had that revelation concerning this nation at a time when the brethren were reflecting and reasoning with regard to African slavery on this continent, and the slavery of the children of men throughout the world. There are other revelations, besides this one, not yet published to the world. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 8, page 58)

Joseph Fielding Smith admits that some of the revelations are still withheld from the world:

**Not all the revelations given to Joseph the Seer were placed in the *Doctrine and Covenants* in his day;** . . . Some of them were for the Church and not for the world, and therefore are given only to the saints. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 280)

It would certainly be interesting to see the revelations that are withheld from the "world," but, as we have already shown, this is next to impossible. The Mormon Church leaders complain that the Catholics withheld the scriptures from the common people, and yet they keep some of Joseph Smith's revelations hid from their own people.

## The Lord's Coming

In 1835 Joseph Smith prophesied that the coming of the Lord was near and that 56 years should wind up the scene. In the *History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 182, we read:

President Smith then stated . . . it was the will of God that those who went to Zion, with a determination to lay down their lives, if necessary, should be ordained to the ministry, and go forth to prune the vineyard for the last time, or **the coming of the Lord**, which was nigh—**even fifty-six years should wind up the scene.**

Klaus J. Hansen gives this interesting information concerning this matter:

. . . in 1890 there was a widespread belief among church members that Joseph Smith's prediction of 1835, that fifty-six years would "wind up the scene," would be

fulfilled. But such enthusiasm was short-lived. In 1903, Patriarch Benjamin F. Johnson, . . . could not conceal his disappointment when he remarked that "we were over seventy years ago taught by our leaders to believe that the coming of Christ and the millennial reign was much nearer than we believe it to be now." (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, page 76)

The Mormon writer Max H. Parkin gives this information:

During the visit of the missionaries in the Reserve, the *Ohio Star*, stated that while they were preaching in the Methodist Chapel in Painesville they "predicted the end of the world in 15 years." According to an article appearing in the *Painesville Telegraph*, when Martin Harris arrived in Kirtland March 12, 1831, he immediately proceeded to the bar-room of the hotel and enthusiastically prophesied to the patrons that "all who believed the new bible would see Christ within fifteen years, and all who did not would absolutely be destroyed and dam'd." . . . In June, 1831, Levi Hancock reported,

Joseph Smith began to speak, he said, "that the kingdom that Christ spoke of . . . would some day come. . . . Some of you shall live to see it come with great glory."

To what extent these early members taught and believed in the imminence of the end of the world may not clearly be established; however, there was at least one case where an afflicted Saint refused to call a physician because of his belief that he would never die. (*Conflict at Kirtland*, Salt Lake City, 1966, pages 53-55)

Under the date of January 23, 1833, Joseph Smith recorded the following in his *History of the Church*:

Among the number, my father presented himself, but before I washed his feet, I asked of him a father's blessing, which he granted by laying his hands upon my head, in the name of Jesus Christ, and declaring that I should continue in the Priest's office **until Christ comes.** (*History of the Church*, Vol. 1, page 323)

John Whitmer states that at the time the High Priesthood was introduced into the Church the following occurred:

The Spirit of the Lord fell upon Joseph in an unusual manner, and he prophesied that John the Revelator was then among the Ten Tribes of Israel . . . After he had prophesied he laid his hands upon Lyman Wight and ordained him . . . And the Spirit fell upon Lyman, and he prophesied concerning the coming of Christ. He said that there were some in the congregation that **should live until the Savior should descend from heaven** with a shout, with all the holy angels with Him. (*John Whitmer's History*, chapter 5; also found in *History of the Church*, Vol. 1, page 176)

When the Twelve Apostles were first ordained in the Mormon Church some of them received the promise that they would live until Christ came. The following appeared in the blessing of Apostle Lyman E. Johnson:

The blessing of Lyman E. Johnson was, . . . that holy angels shall administer to him occasionally; . . . and that he shall live until the gathering is accomplished, . . . and he **shall see the Savior come** and stand upon the earth with power and great glory. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 188)

The following appeared in Heber C. Kimball's blessing:

Heber C. Kimball's blessing was . . . that many millions may be converted by his instrumentality; that angels may waft him from place to place, and that **he may stand unto the coming of our Lord**, . . . (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 189)

William Smith's blessing stated: "He shall be preserved and **remain on the earth, until Christ shall come** to take vengeance on the wicked" (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 191).

The Apostle Orson Hyde's blessing originally stated that "**he shall** stand on earth" till the coming of Christ; however, when this was reprinted in the *History of the Church* it was changed to "**he may** stand on earth." Below is a comparison between the way this was first published in the *Millennial Star*, and the way it was changed to read in the *History of the Church*.

#### MILLENNIAL STAR

. . . he **shall** stand on the earth and bring souls till Christ comes . . . he **shall** have power to smite the earth with pestilence; to divide waters, and lead through the Saints; he **shall** go from land to land, and from sea to sea; he **shall** be like one of the three Nephites. (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 15, page 206)

#### HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

. . . he **may** stand on the earth and bring souls till Christ comes . . . **may** he have power to smite the earth with pestilence; to divide waters and lead through the Saints; **may** he go from land to land and from sea to sea, and **may** he be like one of the three Nephites. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 189)

Of course, none of the Mormon Apostles lived to see the Lord come, and Joseph Smith's statement that "fifty-six years should wind up the scene" did not come to pass.

Writing in 1838, the Mormon Apostle Parley P. Pratt prophesied that in 50 years there would not be an unbelieving Gentile on this continent, and if the inhabitants were not greatly scourged within 5 or 10 years the Book of Mormon would be proven untrue. His statement appears as follows in the tract, *Mormonism Unveiled—Truth Vindicated*:

Now, Mr. Sunderland, you have something definite and tangible, the time, the manner, the means, the names, the dates; and I will state **as a prophecy**, that there **will not be an unbelieving Gentile** upon this continent **50 years hence**; and if they are not **greatly scourged**, and in a great measure **overthrown**, within **five or ten years** from this date, then the **Book of Mormon will have proved itself false**. (*Mormonism Unveiled—Truth Vindicated*, by Parley P. Pratt, page 15; copied from a

microfilm of the original tract at the Mormon Church Historian's Library)

When Parker Pratt Robinson reprinted the tract *Mormonism Unveiled* in the book, *Writings of Parley P. Pratt*, he was apparently embarrassed by Parley P. Pratt's unfulfilled prophecy. He reprinted the statement, "Now, Mr. Sunderland, you have something definite and tangible, the time, the manner, the means, the names, the dates," but instead of putting a semicolon after the word "dates" (as Parley P. Pratt did), he put a period and deleted the entire prophecy without any indication. (See the *Writings of Parley Parker Pratt*, 1952, page 205.)

## A Temple in Zion

In a revelation given by Joseph Smith September 22 and 23, 1832, the following statements appear:

Yea, the word of the Lord concerning his church, established in the last days for the restoration of his people, as he has spoken by the mouth of his prophets, and for the gathering of his saints to stand upon Mount Zion, which shall be the city of New Jerusalem.

Which city shall be built, beginning at the temple lot, which is appointed by the finger of the Lord, in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri, and dedicated by the hand of Joseph Smith, Jun., and others with whom the Lord was well pleased.

Verily this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, **which temple shall be reared in this generation**.

For verily **this generation shall not all pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord**, and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house. . . .

Therefore, as I said concerning the sons of Moses—for the sons of Moses and also the sons of Aaron shall offer an acceptable offering and sacrifice in the house of the Lord, which house shall be built unto the Lord **in this generation**, upon the consecrated spot as I have appointed—(*Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 84, verses 2-5 and 31)

Notice that this revelation, given in 1832, plainly states that a temple would be built in the western boundaries of the state of Missouri (that is, in Independence, Missouri) before all of those that were then living passed away. The leaders of the Mormon Church understood this revelation to mean exactly what it said. Although the Mormons were driven from Independence (Independence is in Jackson County, Missouri), they expected to return and fulfill the prophecy. The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

And when the Saints were driven out from Jackson County, almost all in the Church expected that they would speedily be restored; and a person was considered almost an apostate that would say, they would not come back in five years, or ten at the furthest; . . . The people think of almost everything else but the redemption of Zion, and speak to individuals about it, and they put it off a great distance ahead. But I do not feel to go to this extreme. I will give you my opinion;

so far as the revelations go, in speaking of this subject, I think that this event is nearer than this people are aware of. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 3, page 17)

On April 6, 1845, Brigham Young stated:

... as the Lord lives we will build up Jackson county in **this generation**, (cries of amen) ... and we will be far better off with regard to temporal things. ... (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 6, page 956)

Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church,

... but if you cannot learn to keep the commandments of God in Great Salt Lake City, ... how do you expect to keep them in Jackson County?—for **we are as sure to go back there as we exist**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 134)

They are holy places, and they will be held sacred even as Jackson County; and there is not a man living there but at this day has the spirit of fear upon him and expects that he will have to march some day; and to this day, no man has ventured to cultivate or build upon the Temple Block. Joseph the Prophet dedicated that land, and they feel the effects of that dedication; and the blessings will remain there, and all hell cannot get it off; and I shall yet see the day that, **I will go back there, with Brother Brigham** and with thousands and millions of others, and we will go precisely according to the dedication of the Prophet of the living God. Talk to me about my having any dubiety on my mind about these things being fulfilled!—I am just as confident of it as I am that I am called to be a saviour of men, and no power can hinder it. (*Ibid.*, Vol. 6, page 190)

Brethren, **I shall go to Jackson County** with thousands of this people who will be faithful to their integrity; but we cannot go back until we have built some good houses. (*Ibid.*, Vol. 8, page 350)

Elias Smith stated that he expected “to live to be an old man, and to go back with the Saints to the land of Jackson County” (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 6, page 221). On March 10, 1861, the Mormon Apostle George A. Smith stated:

Who is there that is prepared for this move back to the centre stake of Zion, and where the architects amongst us that are qualified to erect this temple, and the city that will surround it? ... And let me remind you that it is predicted that **this generation shall not pass away till a temple shall be built**, and the glory of the Lord rest upon it, according to the promises. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 9, page 71)

George Q. Cannon made this statement on October 23, 1864:

The day is near when a Temple shall be reared in the Center Stake of Zion, and the Lord has said his glory shall rest on that House in this generation **in which the revelation was given**, which is upwards of thirty years ago. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 10, page 344)

In the 1870's the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt still maintained that the temple would be built in his generation. The following statements are taken from his discourses:

We have ... confidence in returning to Jackson County and the building of a great central city ... There are many of the old stock, who passed through all those tribulations I have named, still living, whose faith in returning to Jackson county, and the things that are coming, is as firm and fixed as the throne of the Almighty. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 13, page 138)

... God promised in the year 1832 that we should, before the generation **then living** had passed away, return and build up the City of Zion in Jackson County; that we should return and build up the temple of the Most High where we formerly laid the corner stone ...

We believe in these promises as much as we believe in any promise ever uttered by the mouth of Jehovah. The Latter-day Saints just as much expect to receive a fulfilment of that promise during the generation that was in existence in 1832 as they expect that the sun will rise and set tomorrow. Why? Because **God cannot lie**. He will fulfil all His promises. He has spoken, **it must come to pass**. This is our faith. (*Ibid.*, Vol. 13, page 362)

We just as much expect that a city will be built, called Zion, in the place and on the land which has been appointed by the Lord our God, and that a temple will be reared on the spot that has been selected, and the cornerstone of which has been laid, in the generation when this revelation was given; we just as much expect this as we expect the sun to rise in the morning and set in the evening; or as much as we expect to see the fulfilment of any of the purposes of the Lord our God, pertaining to the works of his hands. But says the objector, “thirty-nine years have passed away.” What of that? The generation has not passed away; all the people that were living thirty-nine years ago have not passed away; but **before they do pass away this will be fulfilled**. (*Ibid.*, Vol. 14, page 275)

God said, in the year 1832, before we were driven out of Jackson County, in a revelation which you will find here in this book, that before that generation should all pass away, a house of the Lord should be built in that county, ...

This was given forty-two years ago. The generation then living was not only to commence a house of God in Jackson County, Missouri, but was actually **to complete the same**, and when it is completed the glory of God should rest upon it.

Now, do you Latter-day Saints believe that? I do, and if you believe in these revelations you just as much expect the fulfilment of the revelation as of any one that God has ever given in these latter times, or in former ages ... we Latter-day Saints expect to return to Jackson County and to build a Temple there before the generation that was living forty-two years ago has all passed away. Well then, the time **must be pretty near**, when we shall begin the work. (*Ibid.*, Vol. 17, page 111)

By February 7, 1875, Orson Pratt was teaching that only a few of those who were driven from Jackson County would return to receive their inheritances:

We need not expect, from what God has revealed, that a very great number of those who were then in the Church and who were driven, will have the privilege of returning to that land. ... There will be some that will live to behold that day, and will return and receive their

inheritances, they and their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, according to the promise. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 17, pages 291-292)

Joseph Lee Robinson claimed that Jesus appeared to him and told him that the temple would be built in that generation:

On a Sunday evening, . . . A light, a beautiful light, was present before my eyes. . . . Then as quick as thought, a very large building was present before my eyes . . . Presently the voice of the Good Shepherd said to me: "This house you see is the temple of the Living God that shall be built in this generation by the hands of the Latter-day Saints, upon the consecrated spot in Jackson County, Missouri." . . . I know and have testified many times that I know that whatever might befall the Saints, the Temple of the living God will be built by the Saints—the Latter-day Saints—in this generation. ("Diary of Joseph Lee Robinson," as published in *Temples of the Most High*, pages 246-241)

Klaus J. Hansen shows that as late as 1900 Lorenzo Snow, the fifth President of the Church, was still hoping that the prophecy would be fulfilled:

In 1900, Woodruff's successor, Lorenzo Snow, affirmed at a special priesthood meeting in the Salt Lake Temple that "there are many here now under the sound of my voice, probably a majority, who will live to go back to Jackson County and assist in building that temple." (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, page 74)

In 1923 Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl still held to the hope that the revelation would be fulfilled. In the book, *Temples of the Most High*, N. B. Lundwall quotes them as saying the following:

1 "This generation shall not pass away, etc. This is a promise that some living at the time when it was made, in 1832, would still be on earth in the flesh, when the house of the Lord would begin to lift its spires toward the sky on that consecrated ground. A generation does not pass away in one hundred years, and every generation has a few who live over a hundred years."—*Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*, 1923 edition, by Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl. (Quoted in *Temples of the Most High*, page 234)

The 1890 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* carried a footnote which read: "a generation does not all pass away in one hundred years" (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Salt Lake City, 1890, Section 84, page 289). This footnote has been deleted in more recent editions.

As late as 1935 Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became President of the Church, maintained that the revelation would be fulfilled:

I firmly believe that there will be some of that generation who were living when this revelation was given who shall be living when this temple is reared. And I do not believe that the Lord has bound himself to accomplish the matter within one hundred years from 1832, . . . I have full confidence in the word of the Lord and that it shall not fail. (*The Way To Perfection*, Salt Lake City, 1935, page 270)

In a more recent book, however, Joseph Fielding Smith stated: "It is also reasonable to believe that **no soul** living in 1832, is **still living** in mortality on the earth" (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, Vol. 4, page 112). It has now been almost 140 years since Joseph Smith gave the prophecy that the temple would be built in that generation. Since the Mormons have not even begun work on this temple, it appears that there is no way possible for Joseph Smith's prophecy to be fulfilled.

## The Civil War

On December 25, 1832, Joseph Smith gave his famous revelation concerning the Civil War. It is printed as follows in Section 87 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*:

1. Verily, thus saith the Lord concerning the wars that will shortly come to pass, **beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina**, which will eventually terminate in the death and misery of many souls;

2. And the time will come that war will be poured out **upon all nations, beginning at this place.**

3. For behold, the Southern States shall be divided against the Northern States, and the Southern States will call on other nations, even the nation of Great Britain, as it is called, and they shall also call upon **other nations**, in order to defend themselves against **other nations**; and then war shall be poured out upon **all nations.**

4. And it shall come to pass, after many days, slaves shall rise up against their masters, who shall be marshaled and disciplined for war.

5. And it shall come to pass also that the **remnants** who are left of the land will marshal themselves, and shall become exceedingly angry, and shall vex the **Gentiles with a sore vexation.**

6. And thus, with the sword and by bloodshed the inhabitants of the earth shall mourn; and with famine, and plague, and earthquake, and the thunder of heaven, and the fierce and vivid lightning also, shall the inhabitants of the earth be made to feel the wrath, and indignation, and chastening hand of an Almighty God, until the consumption decreed hath made a full end of all nations;

7. That the cry of the saints, and of the blood of the saints, shall cease to come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, from the earth, to be avenged of their enemies.

8. Wherefore, stand ye in holy places, and be not moved, until the day of the Lord come; for behold, it cometh quickly, saith the Lord. Amen. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 87)

The Mormon people believe that this revelation proves that Joseph Smith was a prophet. Larry Jonas, on the other hand, shows that Joseph Smith may have received the idea for this revelation from the views of his time:

On July 14, 1832, Congress passed a tariff act which South Carolina thought was so bad, she declared the tariff null and void. President Andrew Jackson alerted the nation's troops. At the time Smith made his prophecy, the nation expected a war between North and South to begin at the rebellion of South Carolina. This can be confirmed in a U.S. history book. Better yet, let me confirm it

from a Latter-day Saints Church publication, *Evening and Morning Star*, published monthly from Kirtland. Example 28 is page 122 of the issue which came out for January. The news of South Carolina's rebellion was known before January 1833. It was known before December 25, 1832 but it was not available in time for the December issue. It takes quite a while for news to be set up even today in our dailies. We would expect it to wait for a month to come out in a monthly. The example contains the information available to the church before the paper hit the street. The example and the prophecy are strangely similar. . . . Both consider the pending war a sign of the end—**which it was not**. In fact, the war expected in 1832 did not come to pass . . .

Far from being evidences of Smith's divine calling, the most famous prophecies which he made are evidences that he can copy views of his time. (*Mormon Claims Examined*, by Larry S. Jonas, page 52)

One interesting fact that would seem to support the argument that Joseph Smith borrowed from the "views of his time" is that there is another article printed in the January 1833 issue of the original paper, *The Evening and the Morning Star*, which has the title, "Rebellion in South Carolina." Interestingly enough, Joseph Smith's revelation has the words "beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina" in the first verse. In this article we read as follows:

In addition to the above tribulations, South Carolina has rebelled against the laws of the United States; held a state convention, and passed ordinances, the same as declaring herself an independent nation, . . .

And Gen. Jackson has ordered several companies of Artillery to Charleston, and issued a Proclamation, urging submission and declaring such moves as that of S. Carolina Treason. (*The Evening and the Morning Star*, Vol. 1, issue number 8)

Joseph Smith was probably familiar with the fact that South Carolina had rebelled at the time he gave the revelation. Just before the revelation concerning the Civil War is recorded in Joseph Smith's *History*, the following statement is attributed to him:

. . . the United States, amid all her pomp and greatness, was threatened with dissolution. The people of South Carolina, in convention assembled (in November), passed ordinances, declaring their state a free and independent nation; . . . (*History of the Church*, Vol. 1, page 301)

Thus we see that the statement in Joseph Smith's revelation that the wars would begin at the rebellion of South Carolina was probably inspired by the fact that South Carolina had already rebelled before the revelation was given. This rebellion did not end in war, but the Civil War did start some years later over trouble in South Carolina.

The fact that Joseph Smith predicted a civil war is not too remarkable. Many people believed there would be civil war before it came to pass. The December 1840 issue of the *Millennial Star*, quoted an article from the *New York Herald*. In this article a civil war was predicted:

We begin to fear that this unhappy country is on the eve of a bloody **Civil War**, a final dismemberment of the Union . . . (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 1, page 216)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart makes these interesting comments regarding Joseph Smith's revelation:

Many Mormons, better versed in prophecy than history, have supposed that Joseph made this prediction long before there was any thought of Civil War or any evidence to indicate that it would begin in South Carolina. . . . the Prophet himself prefaced the revelation by an account of the South Carolina affair, and the *Evening and Morning Star* treated it in some detail. (*Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet*, Salt Lake City, 1966, page 88)

Alice Smith McKay did a great deal of research with regard to Joseph Smith's revelation concerning the Civil War and came to the conclusion that it was only "the natural result of the stirring conditions of that particular period of history." In her thesis she made these interesting observations:

In 1831, a French Scholar and publicist, Alexis de Tocqueville, came to the United States. He became interested in the study of the machinery of the government and as a result wrote his famous treatise on "Democracy in America." He predicted the "inevitable separation" of the North and the South after his study of existing conditions. ("A Psychological Examination of a Few Prophecies of the Early Founders of Mormonism," unpublished Master's thesis, University of Utah, 1930, page 15)

In the *Annual Register of the History of Europe*, published in London, 1832 (p. 406) is the following prediction of the conditions of the United States:

Civil war and a dissolution of the union seems thus to be a preaching.

This statement was given at the same time that Joseph Smith gave his prophecy. The conditions at South Carolina pointed directly to war. Joseph Smith a man of foresight and wisdom, accurately interpreted the facts and information known. . . . The prediction was given at a period of actual preparation for war in South Carolina. (*Ibid.*, page 19)

In view of the historical evidence, as presented, the most reasonable conclusion is that this Civil War prediction was the natural result of the stirring conditions of that particular period of history. The data in this short discussion indicates very forcibly that this utterance was not "Beyond the power of human sagacity to discern or to calculate." (*Ibid.*, page 20A)

Joseph Smith's revelation concerning the Civil War was never published during his lifetime, and although it is included in the handwritten manuscript of the *History of the Church*, it was suppressed the first two times that Joseph Smith's *History* was printed (see *Times and Seasons*, Vol. 5, page 688; also *Millennial Star*, Vol. 14, pages 296 and 305). It is obvious that this was a deliberate falsification on the part of the Mormon historians, for over 300 words were deleted without any indication!

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts informs us that the revelation was not printed until 1851 (seven



years after Joseph Smith's death): "In Vol. XIII of the *Millennial Star*, published in 1851, pp. 216 and 217, is an advertisement of a new church publication to be called the *Pearl of Great Price*. In the announced contents is named this revelation of December, 1832, with a statement that it had '**never before** appeared in print'" (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, Vol. 1, page 294).

It is interesting to note that verse 3 of Joseph Smith's revelation concerning the Civil War did not come to pass. In verse 3 we read:

... the Southern States will call on other nations, even the nation of Great Britain, as it is called, and they shall also call upon other nations **in order to defend themselves against other nations**; and then **war shall be poured out upon all nations**.

War was certainly not poured out on all nations at that time as Joseph Smith predicted.

Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, in a sermon delivered April 14, 1861, predicted that the Civil War would destroy the nation:

In this country the North and the South will exert themselves against each other, and ere long the whole face of the United States will be in commotion, fighting one against another, and they will **destroy their nationality**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 9, page 55)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, prophesied that the Civil War would continue until the land was emptied so that the Mormons could return to Missouri:

Do they know what they are doing? No; but they have begun to empty the earth, to cleanse the land, and prepare the way for the **return** of the Latter-day Saints to the centre Stake of Zion.

Have we inheritances there? When I left the State of Missouri, I had a deed for five pieces of as good land as any in the State, and I expect to go back to it. . . . Many of the Saints will return to Missouri, and there receive an inheritance . . . The earth will also be emptied upon natural principles: . . . Will it be over in six months or in three years? No; it will take years and years, and will never cease until the work is accomplished. There may be seasons that the fire will appear to be extinguished, and the first you know it will break out in another portion, and all is on fire again, and it will spread and continue **until the land is emptied**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 9, pages 142-143)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt prophesied:

This great war is only a small degree of chastisement, just the beginning; . . . For instance the great, powerful and populous city of **New York**, that may be considered one of the greatest cities of the world, will **in a few years become a mass of ruins**. The people will wonder while gazing on the ruins that cost hundreds of millions to build, what has become of its inhabitants. Their houses will be there, but they will be left desolate. So saith the Lord God. That will be only a sample of numerous other towns and cities on the face of this continent. . . . But there are some in this congregation who will **live**, to behold the fulfillment of these other things, and will **visit the**

**ruins of mighty towns and cities scattered over the face of this land** destitute and desolate of inhabitants. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 12, page 344)

Since Orson Pratt delivered this discourse in 1868, it has been over a hundred years since these prophecies were given.

Wilford Woodruff, who later became President of the Church, made these statements:

I copied a revelation more than twenty-five years ago, in which it is stated that war should be in the south and in the north, and that nation after nation **would become embroiled in the tumult** and excitement, until **war should be poured out upon the whole earth**, and that this war would **commence at the rebellion of South Carolina**, and that times should be such that every man who did not flee to Zion would have to take up the sword against his neighbor or against his brother. . . . Who can stay this war that is devastating the whole nation both North and South? No human hand; . . . Will there ever be anymore peace among them? No, not until the earth is drenched with the blood of the inhabitants thereof. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 10, pages 13 and 15)

The following questions and answers appeared in the February 1854 issue of *The Seer*, edited by Orson Pratt:

Q. What will be the consequence if they do not embrace the Book of Mormon as a divine revelation?

A. They will be **destroyed from the land and sent down to hell**, like all other generations who have rejected a divine message.

Q. In what way will the Lord destroy this nation if they reject the Book of Mormon?

A. By a succession of the most terrible judgments. . . . The bonds of the Union which now hold together the States of this Republic, will be severed, and a fearful, desolating, civil war will rage between the South and the North . . . thus will the whole nation mourn and waste away and perish, unless they will hearken unto the great message which God has in mercy sent to them. There is no other alternative; they must **either embrace the Book of Mormon** as a divine revelation, or be **cut off by judgments** from the land, for it is the sure and certain decree of heaven. (*The Seer*, page 215)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, prophesied that the Civil War could not free the slaves:

Ham will continue to be the servant of servants, as the Lord decreed, until the curse is removed. **Will the present struggle free the slave? No**; . . . Can you destroy the **decrees** of the Almighty? **You cannot**. Yet our Christian brethren think that they are going to overthrow the **sentence** of the Almighty upon the seed of Ham. **They cannot do that**. . . . (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 25, page 787; also published in *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 10, page 250)

Verse 5 of Joseph Smith's prophecy concerning the Civil War is rather unclear: "And it shall come to pass also that the remnants who are left of the land will marshal themselves, and shall become exceedingly

angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation.” The Apostle Orson Pratt explained that the “remnants” mentioned are the Indians:

To add to the sufferings and great calamities of the nation, they will be greatly distressed by the **Aborigines**, who “will marshal themselves and become exceeding angry” and vex them “with a sore vexation.” We are inclined to believe that this will not take place until millions of the nation have already perished in their own revolutionary battles. To what extent the **Indians** will have power over the nation is not stated in this revelation; . . . (*The Seer*, page 242)

The fact that Joseph Smith believed the wicked of his generation would be completely destroyed is obvious from a letter he wrote N. E. Seaton, on January 4, 1833. In this letter he stated:

And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of **bloodshed** as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake **will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land**, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country. . . . flee to Zion, before the overflowing scourge overtake you, for **there are those now living upon the earth whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things**, which I have spoken, **fulfilled**. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 1, pages 315-316)

On October 15, 1843, Joseph Smith stated:

**I prophesy**, in the name of the Lord God of Israel, anguish and wrath and tribulation and the withdrawing of the Spirit of God from the earth await this generation, until they are visited with utter desolation. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 58)

On December 16, 1843, Joseph Smith prophesied:

While discussing the petition to Congress, I prophesied, by virtue of the holy Priesthood vested in me, and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that, if Congress will not hear our petition and grant us protection, **they shall be broken up as a government, and God shall damn them, and there shall nothing be left of them—not even a grease spot**. (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 22, page 455)

When this prophecy was reprinted in the *History of the Church* the Mormon Church historians tried to tame it down by putting a period after the word “government” and omitting the clause “and God shall damn them, and there shall nothing be left of them—not even a grease spot.” See the *History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 116.

Brigham Young also predicted that the Government of the United States would be destroyed. On August 17, 1867, he stated:

I told General Kane that the Government of the United States would be **shivered to pieces**. Will this Government

ever be restored to its former peace and tranquility, and the institutions thereof ever be maintained and honored? If they are, it will be by this people. Everything they are doing at present in Congress is only calculated to widen the breach, and alienate and destroy every vestige of love and affection that may yet be existing; and this they will continue to do until they have severed the last tie and worked out the **entire destruction of the government**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 12, pages 119-120)

## The Gathering

The same revelation that stated that the Mormons were to build a temple at Independence, Missouri, also stated that they were to gather to Independence and build the New Jerusalem. This was to be the land of Zion. In the revelation we read:

Yea, the word of the Lord concerning his church, . . . for the gathering of his saints to stand upon Mount Zion, which shall be the city of New Jerusalem.

Which city shall be built, beginning at the temple lot, which is appointed by the finger of the Lord, in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri. . . .

Verily this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem, shall be built by the gathering of the Saints, beginning at this place, . . . (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 84, verses 2-4)

In 1833 the Mormons who were attempting to build up the city of Zion according to Joseph Smith’s revelation were driven out of Jackson County, Missouri, by the Gentiles. This was a great disappointment to Joseph Smith, and since his reputation as a prophet was at stake, he decided to try to reinstate the Mormons in Jackson County. Klaus J. Hansen states that he “resolved to meet force with force.” On December 16, 1833, Joseph Smith gave a revelation in which the Lord was supposed to have said the following:

And now, I will show unto you a parable, that you may know my will concerning the redemption of Zion.

A certain nobleman had a spot of land, very choice; . . .

And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive-trees.

. . . .

And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my **warriors**, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;

And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and **redeem** my vineyard; for it is mine; I have bought it with money.

Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; **break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen**.

And inasmuch as they gather together against you, **avenge me of mine enemies**, that by and by I may come

with the residue of mine house and possess the land.  
(*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 101, verses 43, 44, 51, 55-58)

On February 24, 1834, Joseph Smith gave a revelation in which the following appears:

Behold, I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come **by power**;

Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel.

For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm.

.....  
Verily, verily I say unto you, that my servant Baurak Ale [Joseph Smith, Jun.] is the man to whom I likened the servant to whom the Lord of the vineyard spake in the parable which I have given unto you.

Therefore let my servant Baurak Ale [Joseph Smith, Jun.] say unto the strength of my house, my young men and the middle aged—Gather yourselves together unto the land of Zion,

And my presence shall be with you even in **avenging me of mine enemies**, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.

.....  
Therefore, if you cannot obtain five hundred, seek diligently that peradventure you may obtain three hundred.

And if ye cannot obtain three hundred, seek diligently that peradventure ye may obtain one hundred.

But verily I say unto you, a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall not go up unto the land of Zion until you have obtained a hundred of the strength of my house, to go up with you unto the land of Zion.

Therefore, as I said unto you, ask and ye shall receive; pray earnestly that peradventure my servant Baurak Ale [Joseph Smith, Jun.] may go with you, and preside in the midst of my people, and organize my kingdom upon the consecrated land, . . .

All victory and glory is brought to pass unto you through your diligence, faithfulness, and prayers of faith.  
(*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 103, verses 15-17, 21, 22, 26, 32-36)

Notice that Joseph Smith's name appears in brackets in the 1963 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* quoted above. A footnote in the *History of the Church*, Vol. 1, page 255 explains:

It was not always desirable that the individuals whom the Lord addressed in revelations should at the time be known by the world, and hence in this and in some subsequent revelations the brethren were addressed by other than their own names. The temporary necessity having passed for keeping the names of the individuals addressed unknown, the real names were subsequently given in brackets.

Joseph Smith did raise an army as commanded, but he was unable to drive the enemy out of Jackson County. Reed Peck made this statement in a manuscript written in 1839:

In accordance with the interpretation of this parable Joseph Smith called for volunteers collected about 210 "Warriors" and marched to Clay County under arms, but the cholera on the second day after their arrival dispersed them and all hopes were destroyed of "redeem[ing] Zion" for the present, but to console the Mormons under this disappointment, Joseph Smith, before he returned from the campaign prophesied publicly to them, that "within three years they should march to Jackson County and there should not be a dog to open his mouth against them" . . . (*Reed Peck Manuscript*, page 3)

The Mormon writer Max Parkin stated:

The Camp, however, failed to accomplish its objective of re-instating the distressed Saints and it further aided in festering the sore of unpopular public opinion the Mormons already had in Ohio. (*Conflict at Kirtland*, page 129)

After the trouble in Missouri, the Mormons tried to build up Kirtland, Ohio. On April 6, 1837, Joseph Smith made this statement concerning Kirtland:

He [Joseph Smith] then closed at about 4 P. M. by uttering **a prophesy** saying this place must be built up, and would be built up, and that every brother that would take hold and help secure and discharge those contracts that had been made, should be rich. (*Messenger and Advocate*, April 1837, Vol. 3, page 488)

When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 479, the first twelve words were deleted. This was apparently done to cover up the fact that the Mormon people considered Joseph Smith's statement "a prophesy."

However this may be, Kirtland was not built by the Mormons as Joseph Smith predicted. Just nine months later this statement appears in Joseph Smith's *History*:

January, 1838.—A new year dawned upon the Church in Kirtland in all the bitterness of the spirit of apostate Mobocracy; . . . Elder Rigdon and myself were obliged to flee . . . On the evening of the 12th of January, about ten o'clock, we left Kirtland, on horseback, to escape mob violence, . . . (*History of the Church*, Vol. 3, page 1)

After the trouble in Kirtland, the Mormons tried to build up Far West, Missouri. On April 26, 1838, Joseph Smith gave a revelation which contains the following statements:

Let the city, Far West, be a holy and consecrated land unto me; and it shall be called most holy, for the ground upon which thou standest is holy.

Therefore, I command you to build a house unto me, for the gathering together of my saints, that they may worship me. . . .

And let the beginning be made on the fourth day of July next; and from that time forth let my people labor diligently to build a house unto my name;

And in one year from this day let them re-commence laying the foundation of my house.

Thus let them from that time forth labor diligently **until it shall be finished**, from the corner stone thereof **unto the top thereof**, until there shall **not anything remain that is not finished**. . . .

And again, verily I say unto you, it is my will that the city of Far West should be built up speedily by the gathering of my saints; . . . (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 115, verses 7, 8, 10, 11, 12 and 17)

Just a few months later the Mormons were driven from Far West, and although they managed to lay the corner stone for the temple, the building itself was never completed.

After this the Mormons tried to build up a city in Illinois which Joseph Smith called Nauvoo. On January 5, 1843, this statement appears in Joseph Smith's *History*:

Esquire Butterfield asked me "to prophesy how many inhabitants would come to Nauvoo." I said, I will not tell how many inhabitants will come to Nauvoo; . . . we have now about 12,000 inhabitants. I will prophesy that we will build up a great city; for we have the stakes and have only to fill up the interstices. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 5, page 232)

An important change has been made in Joseph Smith's *History* regarding the city of Nauvoo. In the *Millennial Star*, Vol. 23, page 280, Joseph Smith was reported as saying:

The Lord has an established law in relation to the matter: there must be a particular spot for the salvation of our dead. I verily believe **this** will be **the** place; . . .

In the *History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 319, this has been changed to read:

The Lord has an established law in relation to the matter: there must be a particular spot for the salvation of our dead. I verily believe **there** will be **a** place, . . .

The reason for this change is obvious; the Mormons were driven from Nauvoo in 1846, just two years after Joseph Smith had said "this will be the place." It is reported that when Brigham Young looked over the valley where Salt Lake City now stands, he said: "This is the place." A temple has been built at Salt Lake City, and work for the dead is performed in this temple.

In her thesis, Alice Smith McKay makes this interesting observation concerning Joseph Smith's idea about the location of "Zion":

Enlargement of the term *Zion* was due to the continued movement of the Saints from one locality to another. Prophecies show that in 1833 Zion meant Independence, Missouri. But after the Saints were driven from Independence, the meaning Zion broadened . . . ("A Psychological Examination of a Few Prophecies of the Early Founders of Mormonism," page 71)

It is interesting to compare a statement made by Joseph Smith on January 4, 1833, with one he made just

before his death in 1844. In the earlier statement Joseph Smith warned that the people of the United States must gather to Zion "in the state of Missouri" to escape from "the overflowing scourge":

And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not parallel in the history of our nation; . . . The people of the Lord, . . . have already commenced gathering together to **Zion**, which **is in the state of Missouri**; therefore I declare unto you the warning which the Lord has commanded to declare unto this generation, . . . **flee to Zion**, before the overflowing scourge overtake you, for there are those now living upon the earth whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things, which I have spoken, fulfilled. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 1, pages 315-316)

On April 8, 1844, however, Joseph Smith declared that all of America is Zion:

You know there has been great discussion in relation to Zion—where it is, and where the gathering of the dispensation is, and which I am now going to tell you. . . . The **whole** of America is **Zion** itself from north to south, and is described by the Prophets, who declare that it is the Zion where the mountain of the Lord should be, and that it should be in the center of the land. . . .

I have received instructions from the Lord that from henceforth wherever the Elders of Israel shall build up churches and branches unto the Lord throughout the States, there shall be a stake of Zion. In the great cities, as Boston, New York, &c., there shall be stakes. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 318-319)

There are a number of statements which Joseph Smith made in the 1830's which show that he believed that the Mormon people would build Zion in Jackson County, Missouri. On December 5, 1833, Joseph Smith wrote a letter in which he stated:

I would inform you, that it is **not** the will of the Lord for you to sell your lands in Zion, if means can possibly be procured for your sustenance without. . . . the spot of ground upon which you are located, is the place appointed of the Lord for your inheritance, and it is right in the sight of God that you contend for it **to the last**.

You will recollect that the Lord has said, that **Zion should not be removed out of her place**; therefore the land should not be sold, but be held by the Saints, until the Lord in His wisdom shall open a way for your return and until that time, if you can purchase a tract of land in Clay county for present emergencies, it is right you should do so, if you can do it, and not sell your land in Jackson county. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 1, pages 450-451)

Five days later Joseph Smith wrote a letter in which he stated:

. . . it is better in the eyes of God that you should die, than that you should give up the land of Zion, the inheritances which you have purchased with your moneys; . . .

Now hear the prayer of your unworthy brother . . . O My God! Thou who hast called and chosen a few, . . . and sent them to Msisouri [*sic*], a place which Thou didst call Zion, . . . and as Thou halt said that no other place should be appointed like unto this, therefore, I ask Thee in the name of Jesus Christ to return Thy people unto their houses and their inheritances, to enjoy the fruit of their labors; that all the waste places may be built up; that all the enemies of Thy people, who will not repent and turn unto Thee may be destroyed from off the face of the land; . . . (*History of the Church*, Vol. 1, pages 455-456)

On December 16, 1833, Joseph Smith gave a revelation which plainly stated that Zion could not be moved:

Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered. . . .

And, behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed, for the work of the gathering of my saints—

Until the day cometh when there is found no more room for them; and then I have other places which I will appoint unto them, and they shall be called stakes, for the curtains or the strength of Zion. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 101:17, 20 and 21)

The reader will remember that although Joseph Smith gathered an army and marched toward Jackson County, he was not successful in his attempt to restore the Mormon people to their lands. In July, 1834, the Mormons wrote “An Appeal” in which they stated:

. . . the propositions of the Jackson county committee could not be accepted on our part, because they proposed to “buy or sell,” and to sell our land would amount to a **denial of our faith**, as that land is **the place** where the **Zion** of God shall stand, according to our faith and belief in the revelations of God, . . . (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 127)

The Mormon people felt so strongly with regard to this matter that it was considered a real offense for a person to sell the land he had acquired in Jackson County. On February 5, 1838, the Far West Presidency were tried for a number of offenses. In the minutes of the proceedings we find the following:

Elder Lyman Wight stated that he considered all other accusations of minor importance compared to Brothers Phelps and Whitmer **selling their lands in Jackson County**; that they had set an example which all the Saints were liable to follow. He said that it was a hellish principle on which they had acted, and that they had **flatly denied the faith in so doing**. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 3, page 4)

It is interesting to note that only about a year later (March 8, 1839) Joseph Smith himself “counseled to sell all the land in Jackson county”:

Alanson Ripley made a report of his journey to Liberty, and said that President Joseph Smith, Jun., counseled to **sell all the land in Jackson County**, and

all other lands in the state whatsoever. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 3, page 274)

The Mormon writer Leland Gentry makes this comment about Joseph Smith’s decision:

The decision to sell the lands in Jackson County was revolutionary indeed, but the exigency of the situation appears to have made it necessary. (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri from 1836 to 1839*, Leland H. Gentry, BYU, 1965, pages 160-161)

As the Mormon leaders changed their ideas concerning Zion, they gradually gave up the idea of “the gathering.” This had been one of the most important teachings in Joseph Smith’s early theology. In a revelation given in 1830 we find the following:

Wherefore the decree hath gone forth from the Father that they shall be gathered in unto one place upon the face of this land, to prepare their hearts and be prepared in all things against the day when tribulation and desolation are sent forth upon the wicked. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 29, verse 8)

In the minutes of a conference held in Norton, Ohio, April 21, 1834, we find the following:

President Joseph Smith, Jun., . . . addressed the conference as follows:

“. . . The time is near when desolation is to cover the earth, and then God will have a place of deliverance in His remnant, and in Zion.” . . .

“Take away the Book of Mormon and the revelations, and where is our religion? We have none; for without Zion, and a place of deliverance, we must fall; . . . for God will gather out His Saints from the Gentiles, and then comes desolation and destruction, and none can escape except the pure in heart who are gathered.” . . .

President Joseph Smith, Jun., prophesied.

“If Zion is not delivered, the time is near when all of this Church, wherever they maybe found, will be pe[r]secuted and destroyed in like manner.” (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, pages 52-53)

On February 1, 1846, this statement was printed in the Mormon publication, *Millennial Star*:

There is no characteristic by which the Saints are distinguished in the present days so peculiar as that of the gathering, and so long as we continue in connexion with the kingdom of God, the doctrine of the gathering will be of **vital importance**, indeed everything hinges upon this point, the Saints must be gathered out from Babylon, in order that they may become a kingdom and a people prepared for the Lord at his coming. (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 7, pages 47-48)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt wrote:

Hence, there is connected with the great message of the Book of Mormon, “a voice from heaven,” commanding the Saints to come out from all nations as fast as they obey the gospel message; this they have been doing for

these many years, and this they will continue to do, until the work of gathering is fully accomplished. And after the saints, who are the salt of the earth, are gathered out, those who are left will quickly perish, as did Sodom and Gomorra. (*Orson Pratt's Works*, "Prophetic Evidence in Favour of the Book of Mormon," page 85)

Klaus J. Hansen given this interesting information:

Mormon missionaries, fanning out to the far corners of the earth, instructed their converts that gathering to Zion was one of the basic tests of orthodoxy. "None of the Saints," admonished Orson Pratt, "can be dilatory upon this subject, and still retain the spirit of God. To neglect or be indifferent about gathering, is just as displeasing in the sight of God as to neglect or be indifferent about baptism for the remission of sins." (*Quest for Empire*, page 47)

The idea of the gathering, which was so important to the early Mormon leaders, has now been abandoned. Richard L. Bushman, a Mormon author, made this statement in a letter published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1966, page 11: "But the doctrine of gathering has been **suspended** and our job now is to live in the world." The Mormon writer James L. Clayton stated: "In our early history, for example, the doctrine of the gathering was assumed to be a permanent part of the Gospel. Today just **the reverse** is taught, and a general gathering of the faithful would be disastrous" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, page 73). The Mormon writer John J. Stewart gives this information:

This program of gathering continued to be a prominent one for the first hundred years of the Church. More recently, having firmly established itself in western America, the Church has undertaken to build up wards and stakes, temples and chapels throughout all parts of the world receptive to its message. Rather than emigrating to Zion, converts are now encouraged to remain in their native lands and help build up the Church there. (*Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet*, Salt Lake City, 1966, page 60)

It would appear, then, that Joseph Smith's doctrine concerning the gathering has failed, and therefore the Church has abandoned this teaching. With this thought in mind it is interesting to read some comments concerning the gathering made by the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt over a hundred years ago:

Joseph Smith . . . professes to have received, through revelation and commandment from God, a dispensation for the gathering of the Saints from all nations. Now the doctrine of the gathering of the Saints in the last days must either be false or true; if **false**, then J. Smith must be an **imposter**. It matters not how correct he may have been in all other points of his system, if this one point—the doctrine of the gathering be false, he must be a **deceiver**. Why? Because he professes to have received this doctrine by direct revelation and commandment. On the other hand, if the doctrine of the gathering of the Saints be a true doctrine and scriptural, this will be another presumptive evidence that Mr. Smith was sent of God. (*Orson Pratt's Works*, "Divine Authority," page 5)

## Joseph's Boys

After Joseph Smith's death it was expected that his son would someday lead the Mormon Church, although he was too young at the time. John D. Lee stated:

Before proceeding further, we must learn who was to be the successor of the Prophet to lead the Church. It was then understood among the Saints that **young Joseph was to succeed his father**, and that right justly belonged to him. Joseph, the Prophet, had bestowed that right upon him by **ordination, but he was too young** at that time to fill the office and discharge its solemn duties. Some one must fill the place until he had grown to more mature age. . . . Time passed on until the whole twelve got in from their missions, and a conference was held, . . . Brigham Young arose and roared like a young lion, imitating the style and voice of Joseph, the Prophet. Many of the brethren declared that they saw the mantle of Joseph fall upon him. I myself, at the time, imagined that I saw and heard a strong resemblance to the Prophet in him, and felt that he was the man to lead us until Joseph's **legal successor** should grow up to manhood, when he should surrender the Presidency to the man who held the **birthright**. (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, photomechanical reprint of 1880 edition, page 155)

On June 29, 1856, Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, made this statement concerning Joseph Smith's boys: "At present the Prophet Joseph's boys lay apparently in a state of slumber, everything seems to be perfectly calm with them, but by and bye God will wake them up, and **they will roar like the thunders of Mount Sinai**" (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, page 6).

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made this statement on June 3, 1860:

What of Joseph Smith's family? What of his boys? . . . They are in the hands of God, and when they make their appearance before this people, full of his power, there are none but what will say—"Amen! we are ready to receive you."

The brethren testify that brother Brigham is brother Joseph's legal successor. **You never heard me say so**. . . . I do not think anything about being Joseph's successor. That is nothing that concerns me. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 8, page 69)

As it ended up the Mormon people did not receive Joseph Smith's sons as Brigham Young prophesied. One of Joseph Smith's sons became the president of the Reorganized LDS Church—this is the church which actively fought against some of the doctrines of the Utah LDS Church.

## Other Prophecies

On August 31, 1856, Brigham Young stated:

In the days of Joseph it was considered a great privilege to be permitted to speak to a member of Congress, but **twenty-six** years will **not** pass away before the Elders of this Church will be **as much** thought of as **the kings** on their thrones. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, page 40)

To those who have studied Mormon history, it is obvious that this prophecy did not come to pass. In 1882—twenty-six years after the prophecy was uttered—the Elders of the Mormon Church were held in derision because they taught polygamy.

On August 30, 1857, Heber C. Kimball boasted:

We are the people of Deseret. **She shall be Deseret; She shall be no more Utah:** we will have our own name. Do you hear it? (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 161)

In spite of Heber C. Kimball's boast the state still goes by the name of Utah.

On September 6, 1856, Heber C. Kimball made these statements:

The Church and kingdom to which we belong will become the kingdom of our God and his Christ, and brother **Brigham Young** will become **President of the United States**. (Voices responded, "Amen.")

And I tell you he will be something more; but we do not now want to give him the name: but he is called and ordained to a far greater station than that, and he is foreordained to take that station, and he has got it; and **I**

**am Vice-President**, and brother Wells is the **Secretary of the Interior**—yes, and of all the armies in the flesh.

You don't believe that; but I can tell you it is one of the smallest things that I can think of. You may think that I am joking; but I am perfectly willing that brother Long should write every word of it; for I can see it just as naturally as I see the earth and the productions thereof. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 219)

Harold Schindler gives this interesting information concerning a prophecy uttered by Brigham Young:

The church leader then added a prophecy which brought hurrahs from his audience. "In twelve years," he said, "I will either be President of the United States or will dictate who shall be!" On this enthusiastic note the Mormon cavalcade began retracing its steps down the steep canyon road to the city. (*Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, University of Utah Press, 1966, page 250)

For other false prophecies and extravagant boasts see the *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 3, pages 228, 253, 262; Vol. 5, pages 10, 93, 94, 164, 173, 274 and 275.

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## 15. THE WORD OF WISDOM

On February 27, 1833, Joseph Smith gave the revelation known as the "Word of Wisdom." This revelation appears as section 89 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. Below is a photograph of this revelation.

### SECTION 89.

REVELATION given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, February 27, 1833, known as the Word of Wisdom. — Abstinence from wine, strong drink, tobacco and hot drinks enjoined—Moderation in the eating of meat—Wholesome foods—Promises to those who live according to these precepts.

1. A Word of Wisdom, for the benefit of the council of high priests, assembled in Kirtland, and the church, and also the saints in Zion—

2. To be sent greeting; not by commandment or constraint, but by revelation and the word of wisdom, showing forth the order and will of God in the temporal salvation of all saints in the last days—

3. Given for a principle with promise, adapted to the capacity of the weak and the weakest of all saints, who are or can be called saints.

4. Behold, verily, thus saith the Lord unto you: In consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days, I have warned you, and forewarn you, by giving unto you this word of wisdom by revelation—

5. That inasmuch as any man drinketh wine or strong drink among you, behold it is not good,

neither meet in the sight of your Father, only in assembling yourselves together to offer up your sacraments before him.

6. And, behold, this should be wine, yea, pure wine of the grape of the vine, of your own make.

7. And, again, strong drinks are not for the belly, but for the washing of your bodies.

8. And again, tobacco is not for the body, neither for the belly, and is not good for man, but is an herb for bruises and all sick cattle, to be used with judgment and skill.

9. And again, hot drinks are not for the body or belly.

10. And again, verily I say unto you, all wholesome herbs God hath ordained for the constitution, nature, and use of man—

11. Every herb in the season thereof, and every fruit in the season thereof; all these to be used with prudence and thanksgiving.

12. Yea, flesh also of beasts and of the fowls of the air, I, the Lord, have ordained for the use of man with thanksgiving; nevertheless they are to be used sparingly;

13. And it is pleasing unto me that they should not be used, only in times of winter, or of cold, or famine.

14. All grain is ordained for the use of man and of beasts, to be the staff of life, not only for man but for the beasts of the field, and the fowls of heaven, and all wild animals that run or creep on the earth;

15. And these hath God made for the use of man only in times of famine and excess of hunger.

16. All grain is good for the food of man; as also the fruit of the vine; that which yieldeth fruit, whether in the ground or above the ground—

17. Nevertheless, wheat for man, and corn for the ox, and oats for the horse, and rye for the fowls and for swine, and for all beasts of the field, and barley for all useful animals, and for mild drinks, as also other grain.

18. And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones;

19. And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

20. And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint.

21. And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them. Amen.

It would appear, however, that in the early history of the Mormon Church all hot drinks were forbidden. On April 7, 1868, the Mormon Apostle George Q. Cannon stated that chocolate drinks and hot soups were forbidden:

We are told, and very plainly too, that hot drinks—tea, coffee, **chocolate**, **cocoa** and all drinks of this kind are not good for man. . . . we must feed our children properly. . . . We must **not permit** them to drink liquor or hot drinks, or **hot soups** or to use tobacco or other articles that are injurious. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 12, pages 221 and 23)

Even though the revelation uses only the words "hot drinks" the Mormon Church today interprets this to mean drinks that contain caffeine. In other words, the emphasis is no longer on whether the drink is hot or cold, but rather how much caffeine it contains. For example, an article in the *Improvement Era* (a Church publication) condemns the drinking of cola drinks. It stated that a large bottle of cola drink contained approximately the same amount of caffeine as a cup of coffee.

Chocolate drinks, on the other hand, even though they are hot and contain a small amount of caffeine, are no longer forbidden. The following appeared on the Editorial Page of the Church Section in the *Deseret News*:

One of the latest efforts to justify drinking coffee is the current propaganda that drinking cocoa or chocolate is against the Word of Wisdom and that cocoa is supposed to contain even more caffeine than does coffee.

It is difficult to understand why some individuals seem to enjoy shocking people with extreme statements, or why they enjoy being the center of attraction so much that they are willing to set forth untruths as though they were facts. . . . **The facts** then completely dispel any notion that cocoa or chocolate is as harmful as coffee. Persons who say that those drinking hot chocolate are breaking in the Word of Wisdom **as effectively as if they drank coffee do not state the truth.** . . .

When interviewing for temple recommends, for instance, or for advancement in the priesthood, or for baptism, or for any other purpose, bishops never inquire as to whether a person drinks cocoa or eats chocolate candy. If the use of cocoa and chocolate were against the doctrine of the Church such inquiry would be made, but it is not. (*Deseret News*, Editorial Page in the Church News, May 5, 1962)

Notice that the Word of Wisdom forbids the use of hot drinks, strong drinks and tobacco. The Mormon Church today interprets hot drinks to mean tea and coffee.

Although some portions of Joseph Smith's Word of Wisdom are stressed by the Mormon leaders, other portions are almost ignored. The Mormon writer John J. Stewart states: "The admonition to eat little meat is **largely ignored**, as are some **other points**, of the revelation" (*Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet*, page 90).

## Origin of Revelation

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made the following statements concerning the conditions that led to the giving of the Word of Wisdom:

I think I am as well acquainted with the circumstances which led to the giving of the Word of Wisdom as any man in the Church, although I was not present at the time to witness them. The first school of the prophets was held in a small room situated over the Prophet Joseph's kitchen, . . . When they assembled together in this room after breakfast, the first they did was **to light their pipes**, and, while smoking, talk about the great things of the kingdom, and **spit** all over the room, and as soon as the pipe was out of their mouths a large chew of tobacco would then be taken. Often when the Prophet entered the room to give the school instructions he would find himself in a cloud of tobacco smoke. This, and the complaints of his wife at having to clean so filthy a floor, made the Prophet think upon the matter, and he inquired of the Lord relating to the conduct of the Elders in using tobacco, and the revelation known as the Word of Wisdom was the result of his inquiry. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 12, page 158)

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, gave a similar explanation for the origin of the Word of Wisdom. The following appeared in an interview with David Whitmer which was published in the *Des Moines Daily News*:

. . . quite a little party of the brethren and sisters being assembled in Smith's house. Some of the men were excessive chewers of the filthy weed, and their disgusting slobbering and spitting caused Mrs. Smith (who, Mr. Whitmer insists, was a lady of predisposed refinement) to make the ironical remark that "It would be a good thing if a revelation could be had declaring the use of tobacco a in and commanding its suppression." The matter was taken up and joked about, one of the brethren suggesting that the revelation should also provide for a total abstinence from tea and coffee drinking, intending this as a counter "dig" at the sisters. Sure enough the subject was afterward taken up in dead earnest, and the "Word of Wisdom" was the result. (*Des Moines Daily News*, Saturday, October 16, 1886)

It has been suggested that the temperance movement led to Joseph Smith's "Word of Wisdom." The Mormon writer Leonard J. Arrington gives this interesting information:

In recent years a number of scholars have contended that the revelation is an outgrowth of the temperance

movement of the early nineteenth century. According to Dean D. McBrien, who first expressed this theory, the Word of Wisdom was a remarkable distillation of the prevailing thought of frontier America in the early 1830's. Each provision in the revelation, he claimed, pertained to an item which had formed the basis of widespread popular agitation in the early 1830's:

A survey of the situation existing at Kirtland when the revelation came forth is a sufficient explanation for it. The temperance wave had for some time been engulfing the West. Just a few years before, Robert Owen had abolished the use of ardent spirits in his community at New Harmony. In 1826 Marcus Morton had founded the American Temperance Society, called at first the Cold Water Society by way of contempt. In June, 1830, the *Millennial Harbinger* quoted in full, and with the hearty personal endorsement of Alexander Campbell, an article from the Philadelphia *Journal of Health*, which in turn was quoting a widely circulated book, *The Simplicity of Health*, which article most strongly **condemned the use of alcohol, tobacco**, the eating intemperately of meats. . . . Temperance Societies were organized in great numbers during the early thirties, six thousand being formed in one year. . . . On October 6, 1830, the Kirtland Temperance Society was organized with two hundred thirty-nine members. . . . This society at Kirtland was a most active one. . . . it revolutionized the social customs of the neighborhood.

McBrien then goes ahead to point out that the Temperance Society succeeded in eliminating a distillery in Kirtland on February 1, 1833, just twenty-seven days before the Latter-day Saint revelation counseling abstinence was announced, and that the distillery at Mentor, near Kirtland, was also closed at the same time. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1959, pages 39-40)

Whitney R. Cross gives this information:

The temperance movement was larger in every dimension than Burned-over District ultraism. It began much earlier and has not yet ended. During the 1830's it attained national scope . . . Further, if alcohol was a specifically sinful compound, the slighter quantity could not change the fundamental nature. . . . if alcohol was evil because it frustrated the Lord's design for the human body, other drugs like **tea, coffee** and **tobacco** must be equally wrong. . . . Josiah Bissell, the Pioneer Line ultraist, had even before the 1831 revival "got beyond Temperance to the Cold Water Society—**no tea, coffee** or any other slops." (*The Burned-Over District*, New York, 1965, pages 211-212)

## Joseph's Example

The Word of Wisdom is considered to be one of the most important revelations in the Mormon Church. A Mormon who continues to break the Word of Wisdom is considered to be weak in the faith. Breaking the Word of Wisdom is considered a sin which can bar a person from the Temple. In order to get a Temple Recommend a person is required to answer this question: "4. Do you keep the Word of Wisdom?" (Temple Recommend Book)

Joseph Fielding Smith, who became the tenth President of the Mormon Church, claims that the habit of drinking tea can “bar” a person from the “celestial kingdom of God”:

SALVATION AND A CUP OF TEA. . . my brethren, if you drink coffee or tea, or take tobacco, are you letting a cup of tea or a little tobacco stand in the road and bar you from the celestial kingdom of God, where you might otherwise have received a fulness of glory? . . . There is not anything that is little in this world in the aggregate. One cup of tea, then it is another cup of tea and another cup of tea, and when you get them all together, they are not so little. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 2, page 16)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart claims that the Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith carefully observed the Word of Wisdom:

. . . no one can hold high office in the Church, on even the stake or ward level, nor participate in temple work, who is a known user of tea, coffee, liquor or tobacco, . . .

The **Prophet himself carefully observed the Word of Wisdom**, and insisted upon its observance by other men in high Church positions, . . . (*Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet*, page 90)

Although most members of the Church feel that Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon Church, “carefully observed the Word of Wisdom,” research reveals just the opposite. In fact, Joseph Smith, the man who introduced the Temple Ceremony into the Mormon Church, would not be able to go through the Temple if he were living today because of his frequent use of alcoholic beverages.

On page 92 of his book, *Sounding Brass*, Dr. Hugh Nibley asks where the evidence is that Joseph Smith drank. We would answer Dr. Nibley by saying that this evidence is found throughout Joseph Smith’s own *History of the Church*. In the *History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 26, we find the following:

The council proceeded to investigate certain charges presented by Elder Rigdon against Martin Harris; one was, that he told A. C. Russell, Esq., that **Joseph drank too much liquor** when he was translating the Book of Mormon; . . .

Brother Harris did not tell Esq. Russell that Brother Joseph drank too much liquor while translating the Book of Mormon, **but this thing occurred previous to the translating of the book**; . . .

The reader will remember that Martin Harris was one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon. The statement by Harris should be compared with a statement found in an affidavit made by Barton Stafford. Stafford, who knew Joseph Smith before he left Palmyra, stated that Smith “was very much addicted to intemperance” (Affidavit of Barton Stafford, dated November 3, 1833, as reprinted in *Joseph Smith and Money Digging*).

It might be argued that this was prior to the time when the Word of Wisdom was given and that Joseph Smith changed his habits after 1833. Evidence, however, plainly shows that Joseph Smith continued to use alcoholic beverages after the Word of Wisdom was given. Under the date of May 2, 1843, the following statement is recorded in Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church*:

Wednesday, 3.—Called at the office and **drank a glass of wine** with Sister Jenetta Richards, made by her mother in England, and reviewed a portion of the conference minutes. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 5, page 380)

Benjamin F. Johnson, a personal friend of Joseph Smith, wrote the following about Smith: “He was partial to a well supplied table and he **did not always refuse the wine the ‘maketh the heart glad’**” (A letter by Benjamin F. Johnson to Elder George S. Gibbs, 1903, as printed in *The Testimony of Joseph Smith’s Best Friend*, page 4). The following references appear in Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church* for January, 1836:

We then partook of some refreshments, and **our hearts were made glad with the fruit of the vine**. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 369)

Elders Orson Hyde, Luke S. Johnson, and Warren Parrish, then presented the Presidency with three servers of glasses filled with wine to bless. And it fell to my lot to attend to this duty, which I cheerfully discharged. It was then passed round in order, then the cake in the same order; and suffice it to say, **our hearts were made glad** while partaking of the bounty of earth which was presented, until we had taken our fill; . . . (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 378)

Joseph Smith continued to disobey the Word of Wisdom until the day of his death. The *History of the Church* reveals the following incident in the Carthage Jail:

Before the jailor came in, his boy brought in some water, and said the guard wanted some **wine**. Joseph gave Dr. Richards two dollars to give the guard; but the guard said one was enough, and would take no more.

The guard immediately sent **for a bottle of wine**, pipes, and two small papers of tobacco; and one of the guards brought them into the jail soon after the jailor went out. Dr. Richards uncorked the bottle, **and presented a glass to Joseph, who tasted, as also Brother Taylor and the Doctor**, and the bottle was then given to the guard, who turned to go out. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 616)

The Mormon leaders have made three important changes concerning the Word of Wisdom in Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church* (for details see our *Case*, Vol. 1, page 36). In one instance, Joseph Smith asked “Brother Markham” to get “a pipe and some tobacco” for the Apostle Willard Richards. These words have been replaced with the word “medicine” in recent editions of

the *History of the Church*. At another time Joseph Smith related that he gave some of the “brethren” a “couple of dollars, with directions to replenish” their supply of “whisky.” In modern editions of the *History of the Church*, 23 words have been deleted from this reference to cover up the fact that Joseph Smith encouraged the “brethren” to disobey the Word of Wisdom. In the third instance, Joseph Smith frankly admitted that he had “drank a glass of beer at Moessers.” These words have been omitted in recent editions of the *History of the Church*.

In her attack on Fawn Brodie’s book, *No Man Knows My History*, the Mormon writer F. L. Stewart makes these statements:

49. NM [*No Man Knows My History*] states that a revelation known as the “Word of Wisdom” states that Mormons should “use wine only at communion.” Therefore, says NM, when Joseph drank wine at weddings, he was breaching this revelation.

The “Word of Wisdom” actually states that wine should be taken “only in assembling yourselves together, to offer up your sacraments before Him.” The correct word is “sacraments,” not “communion.” Since both weddings and baptisms were considered to be sacraments, Joseph was **not** breaching this revelation when he drank wine at weddings . . . (*Exploding the Myth About Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, page 55)

In a footnote on the same page, F. L. Stewart states:

. . . Joseph drank wine as a sacrament at his wife’s baptism in 1830. This custom is no longer practiced at baptism and weddings, and water is now used in the place of wine for the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.

F. L. Stewart’s attempt to explain away Joseph Smith’s disregard for the Word of Wisdom cannot be taken seriously. Joseph Smith’s “glass of wine” with Jenetta Richards had nothing to do with a “sacrament,” nor can his “beer at Moessers” be explained in this manner. When Joseph Smith and his friends drank wine in the jail at Carthage, it was certainly not taken as a sacrament. John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, made this point very clear in the *History of the Church*:

Sometime after dinner we sent for some **wine**. It has been reported by some that this was taken as a sacrament. It was **no such thing**; our spirits were generally dull and heavy, and it was sent for to revive us. . . . I believe we all drank of the **wine**, and gave some to one or two of the prison guards. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 7, page 101)

It is interesting to note that the Apostle John Taylor continued to use alcoholic beverages after Joseph Smith’s death. Hosea Stout recorded the following in his diary on June 3, 1847:

While I was explaining this Prests O. Hyde P. P. Pratt and **John Taylor**, also came in so stoped saying I had been caught twice

Elder Taylor replied to go on and not stop for them. I told him it was nothing but a police meeting and not interesting to them.

“Never mind says he we are police men too.”

Says I. “I hope you will all conform to the rules of the police then.” “Certainly” says **Taylor** “Bring on the **jug**” says I at which they were presented with a **large jug of whiskey**.

This was such an unexpected turn that it was only answered by a peal of laughter & they all paid **due respect to the jug**, . . .

After drinking says Parley “I have traveled these streets all times of the night & never before have I saw a police man but now I know where to find them hereafter” alluding to the **jug**.

“Parley” says I “do you not know that some things in this kingdom are only spiritually discerned & so with the police.” (*On the Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844-1861*, Vol. 1, page 259)

All of the early Mormon Apostles seem to have used alcoholic beverages after the Word of Wisdom was given. Joseph Smith made the following statement concerning an incident that happened in 1840: “April 17.—This day **the Twelve** blessed and **drank a bottle of wine** at Penworthan, made by Mother Moon **forty years before**” (*History of the Church*, Vol. 4, page 120). Under the date of April 12, 1845, Hosea Stout recorded in his diary that he attended “a feast of **beer** and cakes prepared by the old police. The Old police and wives and some of the **Twelve** were present. We had a joyful time as much cakes & **beer** as we could eat and drink . . .” (*On the Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, Vol. 1, page 34). On July 1, 1845, Hosea Stout recorded: “This day there was a grand concert . . . we had also **the 12** and other authorities with us, and was also provided with as much **beer, wine**, cakes &c as we could eat and drink” (Ibid, page 50).

While Joseph Smith and other authorities in the Mormon Church did not observe the Word of Wisdom, others felt that it should be a strict rule of the Church. In the minutes of a Conference held at Far West in 1837 the following statement is found: “The congregation, after a few remarks from Sidney Rigdon, unanimously voted not to support stores and shops selling spirituous liquors, tea, coffee, or tobacco” (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 524). It is interesting to note that when Joseph Smith opened his store in Nauvoo, it was well supplied with tea and coffee: “This day I commenced receiving the first supply of groceries at the new store. Thirteen wagons arrived . . . loaded with sugar, molasses, glass, salt, tea, coffee, &c., purchased in St. Louis” (*History of the Church*, Vol. 4, page 483). In spite of the vote taken at Far West, not to patronize any store selling these items, Joseph Smith seemed to have a thriving business. It appears that Joseph Smith’s own home was supplied with tea and coffee. George A. Smith related: “. . . a certain family, . . . arrived in Kirtland, and the Prophet asked them to stop with him . . . Sister Emma, in the mean time, asked the old lady if she would have a cup of **tea** . . . or a cup of **coffee**. This whole family apostatized because they were invited to take of cup of tea or coffee, after the Word of Wisdom was given” (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, page 214).

Because of the fact that Joseph Smith did not keep the Word of Wisdom, Almon W. Babbitt felt that he had a right to break it. On the 19th of August, 1835, Almon W. Babbitt was brought to trial:

On the 19th, a charge was preferred before a council of the Presidency, against Elder Almon W. Babbitt, . . .

Elder J. B. Smith testified that Elder Babbitt had assumed the prerogative of dictating to him in his preaching; and that he was not keeping the Word of Wisdom.

Elder Babbitt said that he had taken the liberty to break the Word of Wisdom, from the example of **President Joseph Smith Jun.**, and others, but acknowledged that it was wrong, . . . (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 252)

## Joseph's Bar

In Nauvoo Joseph Smith sold liquor; the following ordinance was passed in 1843 (the reader must remember that Joseph Smith was Mayor of Nauvoo at the time):

Ordinance on the Personal Sale of Liquors.

Section 1. Be it ordained by the City Council of Nauvoo, that the **Mayor** of the city be and is hereby authorized to sell or give spirits, of any quantity as he in his wisdom shall judge to be for the health and comfort or convenience of such travelers or other persons as shall visit his house from time to time.

Passed December 12, 1843.

JOSEPH SMITH MAYOR.

Willard Richards, Recorder. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 111)

Joseph Smith's own son related the following:

About 1842, a new and larger house was built for us. . . . Father proceeded to build an extensive addition running out from the south wing toward the east. . . .

At any rate, it seemed spacious then, and a sign was put out giving it the dignified name of "The Nauvoo Mansion," . . . Mother was to be installed as landlady, and soon made a trip to Saint Louis for the purpose of securing such furniture, curtains, bed linen, table napery, dishes, and utensils as were needed to properly equip and operate a hostelry of its kind. . . .

When she returned Mother found installed in the keeping-room of the hotel—that is to say, the main room where the guests assembled and where they were received upon arrival—a **bar**, with counter, shelves, bottles, glasses, and other paraphernalia customary for a **fully-equipped tavern bar**, and Porter Rockwell in charge as tender.

She was very much surprised and disturbed over this arrangement, but said nothing for a while . . . she asked me where Father was. I told her he was in the front room . . . Then she told me to go and tell him she wished to see him. I obeyed, and returned with him to the hall where Mother awaited him. "Joseph," she asked, "What is the meaning of **that bar in this house**?" "How does it look," she asked, "for the spiritual head of a religious body to be keeping a hotel in which is a room fitted out as a **liquor-selling establishment**?"

He reminded her that all taverns had their **bars** at which liquor was sold or dispensed . . .

Mother's reply came emphatically clear, though uttered quietly:

"Well, Joseph, . . . I will take my children and go across to the old house and stay there, for I will not have them raised up under such conditions as this arrangement imposes upon us, nor have them mingle with the kind of men who frequent such a place. You are at liberty to make your choice; **either that bar goes out of the house, or we will!**"

It did not take Father long to make the choice, or he replied immediately, "Very well, Emma; I will have it removed at once"—and he did. (*The Saints' Herald*, January 22, 1935, page 110)

Joseph Smith even tried to justify drunkenness because of the example of Noah. The following appears in Joseph Smith's *History of the Church*:

Sunday, 7. —Elder William O. Clark preached about two hours, reproved the Saints for a lack of sanctity, and a want of holy living, enjoining sanctity, solemnity and temperance in the extreme, in the rigid sectarian style.

I reproved him as Pharisaical and hypocritical . . . "What many call **sin is not sin**; I do many things to break down superstition, and I will break it down;" I referred to the **curse** of Ham for laughing at Noah, while in his wine, **but doing no harm**. Noah was a righteous man, and yet he drank wine and became intoxicated; the Lord did not forsake him in consequence thereof, for he retained all the power of his priesthood, and when he was accused by Canaan, he cursed him by the priesthood which he held, and the Lord had respect to his word, and the priesthood which he held, notwithstanding **he was drunk**, and the curse remains upon the posterity of Canaan until the present day. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 4, pages 445-446)

Oliver Boardman Huntington related the following incident in his journal:

Robert Thompson was a faithful just clerk for Joseph Smith the Prophet in Nauvoo and had been in his office steady near or quite 2 years. **Joseph** said to brother Thompson one day. "Robert I want you to go and get on a buss [bust?] **go and get drunk and have a good spree**, If you don't you will die."

Robert did not do it. He was very pious exemplary man and never guilty of such an impropriety as he thought that to be. In less than 2 weeks he was dead and buried. (Journal of Oliver B. Huntington, typed copy at the Utah State Historical Society, Vol. 2, page 166)

Juanita Brooks shows that there was even drinking in the unfinished Nauvoo Temple:

. . . others were still putting in their time on the temple. On April 23, Samuel Richards told how the carpenters swept up their shavings "after which it was voted that Bro. Angel go and inform the Trustees that the hands were ready to drink the **barrell of wine** which had been reserved for them." The painters continued their work until the evening of April 29, when a group of the workers and their wives met in the attic and "had a feast of cakes pies, **wine**, &c, where we enjoyed ourselves with prayer, preaching, administering for healing, blessing children, and music and **dancing** until near Midnight. The other hands completed the painting in the lower room." (*John D. Lee*, pages 86-87)

On the way to Utah, Brigham Young counseled the Mormons to “make beer as a drink” (*John D. Lee*, page 116). “Two lbs. tea, 5 lbs. coffee” were listed as part of the “requirements of each family of five for the journey across the plains” (*History of the Church*, Vol. 7, page 454). On October 9, 1865, Brigham Young stated that “it is very rarely indeed that I taste tea or coffee; . . .” (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, page 140). However this may be, in 1854 Nunes Carvalho traveled with Brigham Young and reported that Young drank coffee on a regular basis:

This was an imposing travelling party, . . . taking the word of command from the leading wagon, in which rode Gov. Brigham Young. One of his wives, an accomplished and beautiful lady, who made **her husband's coffee**, and cooked his meals for him . . . I sometimes formed a third party on the road, and frequently had my seat at their primitive table. . . . a movable table was arranged in the wagon. Venison, beef, **coffee**, eggs, pies, etc., were served at **every** meal. (*Among the Mormons*, edited by William Mulder & A. Russell Mortensen, page 267)

According to Hosea Stout's diary, Brigham Young made this statement on September 27, 1845: “. . . I am and ever intend to be the Master of my passions—some may say I am in the **habits of taking snuff and tea** yet I am no slave to these passions and can leave these off if they make my brother affronted . . .” (*On the Mormon Frontier; The Diary of Hosea Stout*, Vol. 1, page 75). On April 7, 1867, Brigham Young acknowledged in the Tabernacle that he had chewed tobacco for many years. His excuse was that he used it for a toothache:

. . . it is not my privilege to drink liquor, neither is it my privilege to eat tobacco. Well, bro. Brigham, have you not done it? **Yes, for many years**, but I ceased its **habitual practice**. I used it for toothache; now I am free from that pain, and my mouth is never stained with tobacco. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 12, page 404)

Brigham Young's son, Brigham Young, Jun., did not try to excuse his use of tobacco as his father did. He stated:

I remember once, when a boy, Jedediah M. Grant saw me chewing tobacco, and said he, “You chew tobacco, do you?” “Yes, sir.” “Well, I never had any taste for it; it is no virtue in me that I do not use it, I tried hard enough, but it made me sick.” The virtue, brethren, is in putting away or overcoming habits which you know would impede your progress in the kingdom of God. It was not virtue in Bro. Grant that he did not chew tobacco, he tried to learn how, but could not do it. I tried, and **succeeded**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 15, page 141-142)

## Young's Distillery

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated:

“Boothill cemeteries,” in which were buried men killed in unholy orgies, mostly in saloons, are not found in Utah. Saloons came there with non-Mormons. (*Gospel Interpretations*, Salt Lake City, 1947, page 250)

This statement by the Apostle Widtsoe is certainly untrue. Actually, Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, owned the “first bar-room” in Salt Lake City. The historian Hurbert Howe Bancroft gives this information:

As to the manufacture of whiskey, President Taylor states that alcohol was first made **by the Saints** for bathing, pickling, and medicinal purposes, and was little used for drinking. **Stills** were afterward obtained from emigrants, and the manufacture and sale of alcohol were later controlled by the city councils. The **first bar-room** in S. L. City, and the only one for years, was in the Salt Lake House, owned by **President Young** and Feramorz Little. It was opened for the accommodation of travellers, whose requirements would be supplied by someone, and it was thought by the brethren that they had better control the trade than have outsiders do so. (*History of Utah*, page 540, footnote 44)

Stanley P. Hirshson states:

In Nauvoo the Mormons drank heavily. . . . in December 1843 the Mormon-controlled City Council authorized Joseph Smith to sell liquor in his hotel.

In Utah the church dominated the liquor trade. In 1856 Caleb Green freighted six tons of tobacco, rum, whiskey, brandy, tea, and coffee across the plains for Young, and two years later *The New York Times* reported that the “principal drinking-saloon and gambling-room are in Salt Lake House, a building under the control of the Church and the immediate superintendency of Heber C. Kimball.” . . .

Young tried his best to rid himself of rival brewers. (*The Lion of the Lord*, page 285)

On June 7, 1863, Brigham Young acknowledged to the congregation assembled in the Bowery, that he had built a distillery:

When there was **no whiskey to be had** here, and we needed it for rational purposes, **I built a house to make it in**. When the **distillery** was almost completed and in good working order, an army was heard of in our vicinity and I shut up the works; I did not make a gallon of whisky at my works, because it came here in great quantities, more than was needed. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 10, page 206)

Hurbert Howe Bancroft gives this information: “Peter K. Dotson, . . . came to Salt Lake City in 1851, and was first employed by **Brigham** as manager of a **distillery**, afterwards becoming express and mail agent” (*History of Utah*, page 573, footnote 2). Josiah F. Gibbs gives this interesting information concerning Brigham Young's distillery:

During forty years the Mormon prophets absolutely controlled the city council and police force of Salt Lake. And whatever vice and crime arose from the sale and consumption of intoxicants during the period under discussion, is justly chargeable to the Mormon leaders.

Instead, however, of bringing their unappealable dictum to bear on the side of temperance and decent morals, the Prophet Brigham became a distiller of whiskey and other intoxicants, and high priests were the wholesale and retail distributors.

The evidence in support of the foregoing allegations is clipped from data compiled from the city records by gentlemen living in Salt Lake City, . . .

On July 2, 1861, the special committee, to whom was referred the subject of the manufacture and sale of liquor, presented a report reading as follows:

To the Honorable Mayor of Salt Lake City:

Your committee, to whom was referred the subject of the manufacture and sale of spirituous liquor, would report that they visited several distilleries in and near the city and would respectfully recommend that the City Council purchase or rent the **distillery erected by Brigham Young** near the Mouth of Parley's canyon, and put the same in immediate operation, employing such persons as shall be deemed necessary to manufacture a sufficient quantity to answer the public demand; controlling the sale of the same, and that the profits accruing therefrom be paid into the City Treasury.

(Signed) Alderman Clinton,  
Alderman Sheets,  
Councilman Felt.

(*Lights and Shadows of Mormonism*, by Josiah F. Gibbs, Salt Lake City, 1909, pages 248-249)

Orlando W. Powers, who served as associate justice of the supreme court of Utah, gave this testimony in the "Reed Smoot Case":

After the Liberal Party had secured control of the city of Salt Lake, I procured an investigation to be made of the city records, which had been written up by the Mormon city recorders from the earliest time, . . .

The leading officials of the church seem to have had access to the city's treasury. On one occasion Brigham Young borrowed from the city of Salt Lake \$10,000. . . . In 1873 he borrowed \$14,000. The records show that other leading church officials at times borrowed from the city.

The city of Salt Lake at that time ran a saloon—a city saloon. It had a city billiard hall. It had a city bathing establishment. It ran a **distillery**. Its recorder kept an account with the trustee in trust for the Mormon Church, which trustee was credited with tithing—and the tithing, by the way, is the 10 per cent that good Mormons are supposed to pay into the church—due from the various church officials, and they were charged with liquor, and for bathing, and for things of that kind. (*Reed Smoot Case*, Vol. 1, pages 804-805)

According to John D. Lee, Brigham Young kept a large supply of liquor. Under the date of May, 14 [15th], 1867, Lee recorded the following in his journal:

About 5 P. M. Prest, B. Young & suite arrived in the city from his southern visit among the Sai[n]ts. . . . On the following day I went to see him in his Mansion where I spent near 1/2 day—very agreeable indeed. He had a **decanter of sp[eci]al wine** brought in of his own make & said, I want to treat Bro. Lee to as Good an article, I think, as can be bought in Dixie. The **wine** indeed was a Superiour article. He said that he had some **300 gallons** & treated about **2000\$ worth of liquors** yearly & continued that we [he] wish[e]d that some one would take **his wine** at **5\$ per gallon & sell it**, where upon **Pres. D. H. Wells said that he would take 200 gals.** at 6\$ a gallon &c. (*A Mormon Chronicle, The Diaries of John D. Lee*, Vol. 2, pages 71-72)

In 1867, Brigham Young stated that most of the Bishops did not observe the Word of Wisdom:

You go through the wards in the city, and then through the wards in the country, and ask the Bishops—"Do you keep the Word of Wisdom?" The reply will be "Yes; No, not exactly." "Do you drink tea?" "No." "Coffee?" "No." "Do you drink whisky?" "No." "Well, then, why do you not observe the Word of Wisdom?" "Well, this **tobacco, I cannot give it up.**" And in this he sets an example to every man, and to every boy over ten years of age, in his ward, to nibble at and chew tobacco. You go to another ward, and perhaps the Bishop does not chew tobacco, nor drink tea nor coffee, but once in a while he takes a **little spirits**, and keeps **whiskey** in his house, in which he will occasionally **indulge**—Go to another ward, and perhaps the Bishop does not drink whisky nor chew tobacco, but he "cannot give up his tea and coffee." And so it goes through the whole church. Not every Bishop indulges in one or more of these habits, but **most of them do.** I recollect being at a trial not long since where quite a number of Bishops had been called in as witnesses, but I could not learn that there **was one who did not drink whiskey, and I think that most of them drank tea and coffee.** I think that we have **some bishops** in this city who do not chew tobacco, nor drink liquor nor tea nor coffee **to excess.** . . . If a person is weary, worn out, cast down, fainting, or dying, a **brandy sling**, a little **wine**, or a cup of **tea** is good to revive them. **Do not throw these things away, and say they must never be used;** they are good to be used with judgment, prudence, and discretion. Ask our **bishops if they drink tea every day, and in most cases they will "tell you they do if they can get it."** (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 12, pages 27-28; misprinted page numbers as 402-403)

The same year that Brigham Young made the statements cited above, the Apostle Wilford Woodruff stated: "Very few of us have kept the Word of Wisdom; but I have no doubt that if the council of President Young were carried out it would save the people of this Territory a **million of dollars annually**" (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, page 370). In a sermon delivered March 10, 1860, Brigham Young stated: "Many of the brethren chew tobacco, and I have advised them to be modest about it. Do not take out a **whole plug of tobacco in meeting before the eyes of the congregation, and cut off a slice and put it in your mouth**, to the annoyance of everybody around. Do not glory in this disgraceful practice. If you must use tobacco, put a small portion in your mouth when no person sees you, and be careful that no one sees you chew it. I do not charge you with sin. You have the 'Word of Wisdom.' Read it" (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 8, page 361). Tobacco chewing became a serious problem in the Tabernacle, for in 1870 Brigham Young stated:

There is another subject I wish to refer to. Last Sabbath this front gallery, . . . was very full. After meeting was dismissed I took a walk through it, and to see the floor that had been occupied by those professing



to be gentlemen, and I do not know but brethren, you might have supposed that cattle had been there rolling and standing around, for here and there were **great quids of tobacco, and places one or two feet square smeared with tobacco juice**. I want to say to the doorkeepers that when you see gentlemen who cannot omit chewing and **spitting while in this house**, request them to leave; and if such persons refuse to leave, and continue their spitting, just take them and lead them out carefully and kindly. We do not want to have the house thus defiled. It is an imposition for gentlemen to **spit tobacco juice** around, or to leave their **quids of tobacco** on the floor; they dirty the house, and if a lady happen to besmear the bottom of her dress, which can hardly be avoided, it is highly offensive. We therefore request **all gentlemen attending conference to omit tobacco chewing while here**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 13, page 344)

The Mormon writer Leonard J. Arrington makes these interesting observations concerning the “Word of Wisdom”:

The strong and increased emphasis on the Word of Wisdom which characterized the official Mormon attitude throughout the remainder of the century appears to have begun in 1867. . . .

The explanation for these rules and the widespread resolves to obey the Word of Wisdom seems to lie in the conditions of the Mormon economy . . . it was necessary for the Latter-day Saints to develop and maintain a self-sufficient economy in their Rocky Mountain retreat. Economic independence was a necessary goal of the group and every program of the church tended toward that end . . . There must be no waste of liquid assets on imported consumers’ goods. . . . Saints who used their cash to purchase imported Bull Durham, Battle-Axe plugs, tea, coffee, and similar “wasteful” (because not productive) products were taking an action which was opposed to the economic interests of the territory. In view of this situation, President Young came to be unalterably opposed to the expenditure of money by the Saints on imported tea, coffee, and tobacco. It was consistent with the economics of the time that he should have had no great objection to tobacco chewing if the tobacco was grown locally. It was also consistent that he should have successfully developed a locally-produced “Mormon” tea to take the place of the imported article. . . . In a letter of instructions to all the settlements south of Great Salt Lake City, President Young wrote:

This community has not yet concluded to entirely dispense with the use of tobacco, and great quantities have been imported . . . I know of no better climate and soil than are here for the successful culture of tobacco. Instead of buying it in a foreign market and importing it over a thousand miles, **why not raise it in our country or do without it?** . . . **Tea is in great demand in Utah, and anything under that name sells readily at an extravagant price.** . . . Tea can be produced in this Territory in sufficient quantities for home consumption, and **if we raise it ourselves we know that we have the pure article**. If we do not raise it, I would suggest that we do without it.

(*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1959, pages 43-45)

In his sermons Brigham Young made these statements concerning tea, coffee, tobacco and whiskey:

You know that we all profess to believe the “Word of Wisdom.” There has been a great deal said about it, more in former than in latter years. We as Latter-day Saints, care but little about tobacco; **but as “Mormons,” we use a vast quantity of it. As Saints, we use but little; as “Mormons” we use a great deal.** . . . The traders and passing emigration have sold **tons of tobacco**, besides what is sold here regularly. I say that \$60,000 annually is the smallest figure I can estimate the sales at. Tobacco can be raised here as well as it can be raised in any other place. It wants attention and care. If we use it, let us raise it here. **I recommend for some man to go to raising tobacco**. One man, who came here last fall, is going to do so; and if he is diligent, he will raise quite a quantity. I want to see some man **go to and make a business of raising tobacco and stop spending money out of the territory for that article**.

Some of the brethren are very strenuous upon the “Word of Wisdom,” and would like to have me preach upon it, and urge it upon the brethren, and make it a test of fellowship. I do **not** think that I shall do so. I have never done so. We annually expend only \$60,000 to break the “Word of Wisdom,” and we can save the money and **still break it, if we will break it**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 9, page 35)

What I am now about to say is on the subject of tobacco. **Let us raise our own tobacco, or quit using it**. In the years ‘49, ‘50, ‘51, ‘52, and ‘53, and so long as I kept myself posted . . . we spent upwards of \$100,000 dollars a year for tobacco alone! **We now spend considerably more than we did then**. Let us save this ready means in our country by abstaining from the use of this narcotic, **or raise it ourselves**. (*Ibid.*, Vol. 11, page 140)

It is true that we do not raise our own tobacco: we might raise it if we would. We do not raise our tea; but we might raise it **if we would**, for tea-raising, this is as good a country as China; **and the coffee bean can be raised a short distance south of us**. . . . We can sustain ourselves; and as for such so-called luxuries as **tea, coffee, tobacco and whiskey**, we can produce them or do without them. (*Ibid.*, Vol. 11, pages 113-114)

Brigham Young also recommended that the Mormons make wine. Angus M. Woodbury stated:

A circular was sent out to the various orders of the stake by Brigham Young and George A. Smith suggesting policies of operation. In brief, it suggested that fruit be canned or dried fit for any market; **that wine be made at few places under expert direction for exportation**; . . . (*The Mormon United Order in Utah*, page 9)

Leonard J. Arrington informs us that Brigham Young wanted most of the wine to be sold to the gentiles:

The attempts of the latter-day Saints in southern Utah and elsewhere to **make wine** are all illustrative of the dominating philosophy of economic self-sufficiency. One function of these enterprises, of course, was to provide wine for the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. . . . Wine was used in the sacrament of the church as late as 1897. A more important function of wine-making, however, was to provide much-needed income for the poverty-stricken pioneers in Utah’s Dixie. The intention

was to sell most of the wine in mining communities in southern Utah and Nevada. Brigham Young instructed as follows: "First, by lightly pressing, make a white wine. Then give a heavier pressing and make a colored wine. Then barrel up this wine, and if my counsel is taken, this wine will not be drunk here, but will be exported, and thus increase the fund." **More of the Dixie wine was consumed in the Mormon settlements than church officials had hoped,** however, and the enterprise was discontinued before 1900. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1959, pages 46-47)

In footnote 29 on page 251 of *A Mormon Chronicle*, Vol. 2, this interesting information is given:

At Brigham Young's suggestion, Neagle went east and purchased a flour mill, a sawmill, and a carding machine, all of which he set up in American Fork Canyon. In 1865 he was called upon to take charge of the **wine-making industry at Toquerville**. Here he raised many varieties of grapes, imported a wine press from California, and soon became the largest wine producer in the intermountain area. His large stone house with the wine-cellar basement still stands in Toquerville.

In his book, *Desert Saints*, Nels Anderson give this interesting information:

Wine-making was another Mormon enterprise that came to the same end as the cotton, iron, and silk missions. The St. George Tithing Office reported on March, 1887, a supply of 6,610 **gallons of wine**, valued at 50 cents per gallon. . . .

The making of wine and some whiskey and brandy went ahead without organized direction for more than a decade. On March 26, 1874, when Brigham Young spoke to the women about making silk, he mentioned ways of keeping Mormon money at home . . . He favored making wine for sale to outsiders . . .

Since the church encouraged wine-making, it was not possible for the tithing offices to refuse wine as tithing. . . . The tithing office at St. George received wine of many grades. It met the problem by setting up standards. The tithing clerk issued these instructions on September 20, 1879:

In order to obtain a more uniform grade of wine than we are able to obtain by mixing together the tithes of small pressings in the hands of sundry individuals; it is suggested that those having but small quantities of grapes to make up into wine, deliver their tithes in grapes at this office. This may be arranged under the direction of the bishop so that economy may be preserved in the hauling, for which, of course, credit will be given on the tithing account.

Thus the church found itself the chief single producer of wine in the Dixie area . . . Because the tithing offices held the largest amount of wine for the market at any time, it was in a position to name the price. Church interest is evidenced in a letter sent by the St. George Tithing Office August 12, 1880. This letter was a bill sent to the managers in charge of building the Manti Temple, to whom had been sent a quantity of wine—4 barrels, or 158 gallons. It was not sold, but tithing credit was asked as follows: \$187.50 for the wine; \$20.00 for the barrels; for hauling the wine to Manti, \$16.00; total \$233.50. This was given in pay to the builders of the temple.

In 1889 Edward H. Snow, clerk of the St. George Tithing Office, wrote the presiding bishop at Salt Lake City regarding wine: "Our sales during the year do not amount to half of what we are obliged to make up from the grapes that are brought in. . . . We have made at this office alone over 600 gallons this year. We cannot refuse the grapes or the wine, and I see no way to get rid of it." Snow wanted the presiding bishop to take the surplus. Later the tithing office sent men with loads of wine to the northern settlements, where they traded Dixie's liquid wealth for wheat and flour or took it to the mining camps, . . .

Dixie brethren did not follow Brother Brigham's counsel. They drank so much of the wine that by 1890 drunkenness was a worry to the church leaders. The tithing office discontinued accepting wine for tithes and abandoned its own presses. (*Desert Saints*, by Nels Anderson, University of Chicago Press, 1966, pages 373-374)

The Mormon wine business proved the entering wedge for a kind of fraternalism between Mormons and Gentiles which was very disturbing to local church leaders. Mormons who drank wine with the Gentiles became friendly with them. Besides breaking down the social barriers, wine-drinking became a vice to some of the brethren. . . .

The High Council complained that some wine-drinkers did not pay their tithing, that others neglected their families, and that still other wine-drinkers were degenerating into loafers. . . . The bishops were required to take offenders to task; but this was not easy, since in some wards most of the brethren made wine for sale and most of the brethren had become wine-drinkers to some degree. . . .

Since the St. George Tithing Office, as a practical measure, had originally joined with the farmers in making wine, the church authorities were much embarrassed in pushing their drive against wine-drinkers. About 1887 the tithing office discontinued making wine. The passing of Silver Reef as a market left the producers with quantities of wine on hand. The tithing office managed, as well as it could, to get rid of the more than **six thousand gallons on hand**.

From the moral angle, church leaders were forced to recognize that their people could not be makers of liquor without being drinkers of it, too. There were too many drinkers of wine and too few moderate drinkers among them. (*Ibid.*, pages 435-436)

## Hypocrisy

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt once stated: "I do not wonder that the world say that the Latter-day Saints do not believe their own revelations. Why? Because we do not practice them" (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 17, page 104).

We have shown that Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon Church, did not keep the Word of Wisdom, yet, according to Joseph Fielding Smith, Joseph Smith taught that a member of the Church could not hold an office unless he observed the Word of Wisdom: "One question considered was as follows: 'Whether disobedience to the word of wisdom was a transgression sufficient to deprive an official member from holding office in the Church, after having it sufficiently taught him?' After a free and full discussion Joseph Smith, who presided, gave his decision as follows: 'No official member in this Church is worthy

to hold an office after having the word of wisdom properly taught him; and he, the official member, neglecting to comply with or obey it.' This decision was confirmed by unanimous vote" (*Essentials in Church History*, page 169).

It is certainly strange that Joseph Smith could break the Word of Wisdom and yet retain his position as President of the Church. The thing that makes this especially strange is that when a member of the Church did not observe the Word of Wisdom, this was sometimes used against him if he was tried for his fellowship. Leonard J. Arrington stated: "Moreover, when a council at Far West tried a high church official (David Whitmer) for his fellowship, the first of the five charges against him was that he did not observe the Word of Wisdom" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1959, page 40). As we have already shown, when Almon W. Babbitt was charged with not observing the Word of Wisdom, his only defence was that he "had taken the liberty to break the Word of Wisdom, from the example of President Joseph Smith, Jun., and others." We have also shown that after Joseph Smith's death, Brigham Young and other Church leaders did not observe the Word of Wisdom.

It is a well known fact that Ann Eliza Webb, who was married to Brigham Young, later left Young and wrote a book against the Mormon Church. Dr. Hugh Nibley tried to discredit her book by stating that she was never a good Mormon:

She may have detested the man, but if she **really** believed in his religion, as she perpetually protests, her behavior would have been totally different: at the **very least** she would have gone to prayers, **kept the Word of Wisdom**, and paid tithing—none of which she did. (*Sounding Brass*, page 152)

Using the same argument, we would ask Dr. Nibley why Joseph Smith and Brigham Young did not keep the Word of Wisdom?

Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency, once stated that virtuous Saints would not sell whiskey or establish distilleries: "... **virtuous Saints . . . will not sell whiskey**, and stick up groceries, and **establish distilleries**, . . ." (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, page 161). This statement seems very strange when we learn that Joseph Smith sold whiskey in Nauvoo, and that Brigham Young built a distillery and sold alcoholic beverages in Utah. Even the Mormon-owned Zions Cooperative Mercantile Institution (now known as ZCMI) sold the items forbidden by the Word of Wisdom. On October 7, 1873, George A. Smith, a member of the First Presidency, made this statement: "We are **doing a great business in tea, coffee, and tobacco** in the Co-operative Store" (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 16, page 238). Joseph F. Smith, the sixth President of the Mormon Church, tried to justify the sale of these items in the Church store:

Some of our pretended pious people, a few years ago, were shocked and horrified by seeing the symbol of the

All-Seeing Eye and the words "Holiness to the Lord" in gilt letters over the front of Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution. Especially was this the case with some of our brethren when they found these letters over the drug department of Z.C.M.I. Why was it? Why some of these pious (?) Mormons found that Z.C.M.I. **under the symbol of the All-Seeing Eye and the sacred words, "Holiness to the Lord," sold tea and coffee, and tobacco**, and other things possibly that Latter-day Saints ought not to use; and at the drug store, Z.C.M.I. **kept liquors** of various kinds for medicinal purposes. It was terribly shocking to some of the Latter-day Saints that **under these holy words liquor should be kept for sale**. Has it ever injured me, in any sense of the word, because Z.C.M.I. drug store kept liquor for sale? Has it made me a drunkard? Have I been under the necessity of guzzling liquid poison? Have I made myself a sot because liquor was **kept by Z.C.M.I.**? I am not the worse for it, thank the Lord. And who else is? No one, except those pious Mormons(?) who in open day or under the cover of night would go into the drug store and buy liquor to drink. . . . Those who were the most horrified at seeing the All-Seeing Eye and "Holiness to the Lord" over the front door of Z.C.M.I., I will guarantee are the **ones that have bought the most tea and coffee, tobacco and whisky there**. . . . It does not matter to me how much tea and coffee Z.C.M.I. sells, so long as I do not buy it. If I do not drink it am I not all right? And if the poor creature that wants it can get it there, that ought to satisfy him. **If he could not get it there, he would not patronize Z.C.M.I. at all, but would go some where else to deal.** (*Conference Report*, April 1898, page 11)

It is interesting to note that Joseph F. Smith served as President of Z.C.M.I. (as well as President of the Church) at the time liquor was sold there.

Although the Word of Wisdom contains some good precepts, it is obviously a product of the thinking of Joseph Smith's times. Alcoholic beverages were condemned by the temperance movement years before Joseph Smith gave his "revelation." Although Joseph Smith was correct in stating that tobacco is harmful, we do not feel that this proves that his "revelation" is divinely inspired. The *Wayne Sentinel*—a newspaper printed in the neighborhood where Joseph Smith grew up—published these statements concerning tobacco three years before Joseph Smith gave his "Word of Wisdom."

It is really surprising that a single individual could be found, who, after experiencing the distressing sensations almost invariably produced by the first use of tobacco, would be willing to risk their recurrence a second time: . . . **tobacco is, in fact, an absolute poison**, . . .

We have ourselves known individuals, in whom very severe and dangerous affections of the stomach—tremors of the limbs, and great emaciation, were referable to excessive smoking and chewing, and which were removed only after these habits were entirely relinquished. (*Wayne Sentinel*, November 6, 1829)

For a number of years LaMar Petersen has been making a study of Joseph Smith's attitude toward the "Word of Wisdom." When this study is published it will throw a great deal of light on the subject.

## 16. THE PRIESTHOOD

The Mormon leaders claim that those who hold the Priesthood in the Mormon Church are the only ones who have the authority to administer the ordinances of the Gospel. This concept leads members of the Mormon Church to believe that the work of other churches is in vain. In the Mormon Missionary Handbook we read the following:

Elder: **Why is the Priesthood so important?**

Brown: Because a man must have it to do those things.

Elder: He certainly must. Suppose a priest or minister baptizes without the priesthood, what does that mean in the sight of the Lord?

Brown: It doesn't mean anything.

Elder: Why is that?

Brown: Because he would lack the necessary authority.

Elder: Right. So even though a minister might be sincere, unless he has the Priesthood, will the Lord recognize a baptism performed by him?

Brown: No.

(*A Uniform System For Teaching Investigators*, page 15)

### Added Later

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, said the following concerning the Mormon Priesthood:

This matter of "priesthood," since the days of Sydney Rigdon, has been the great hobby and stumbling-block of the Latter Day Saints. Priesthood means authority; and authority is the word we should use. I do not think the word priesthood is mentioned in the New Covenant of the Book of Mormon. Authority is the word we used for the first two years in the church—until Sydney Rigdon's days in Ohio. This matter of the two orders of priesthood in the Church of Christ, and lineal priesthood of the old law being in the church, all originated in the mind of Sydney Rigdon. He explained these things to Brother Joseph in his way, out of the old Scriptures, and got

Brother Joseph to inquire, etc. He would inquire, and as mouth-piece speak out the revelations just as they had it fixed in their hearts. As I have said before, according to the desires of the heart, the inspiration comes, but it may be the spirit of man that gives it . . . This is the way the High Priests and the "priesthood" as you have it, was introduced into the Church of Christ almost two years after its beginning—and after we had baptized and confirmed about two thousand souls into the church. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, by David Whitmer, page 64)

The question might well be asked, "If what David Whitmer says is true, how can Section 27 and other sections of the *Doctrine and Covenants* be accounted for"? It does seem like there is a contradiction here. Section 27 tells of the bestowal of the lesser priesthood and the visitation of Peter, James, and John, and is dated August 1830, whereas David Whitmer stated that the idea of two orders of priesthood, lineal priesthood, etc., did not come into the Church until Sydney Rigdon's days in Ohio. Actually, these revelations have been changed from the way they originally read when they were first printed in the *Book of Commandments*. David Whitmer stated:

You have **changed the revelations** from the way they were first given and as they are today in the *Book of Commandments*, to support the error of Brother Joseph in taking upon himself the office of Seer to the church. You have changed the revelations to support the error of high priests. You have changed the revelation to support the error of a President of the high priesthood, high counselors, etc. You have altered the revelations to support you in going beyond the plain teachings of Christ in the new covenant part of the Book of Mormon. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, page 49)

In his book, *Problems in Mormon Text*, LaMar Petersen gives this interesting information about the changes concerning Priesthood which have been made in Joseph Smith's revelations:

The important details that are missing from the “full history” of 1834 are likewise missing from the *Book of Commandments* in 1833. The student would expect to find all the particulars of the Restoration in this first treasured set of 65 revelations, the dates of which encompassed the bestowals of the two Priesthoods, but they are conspicuously absent . . . The notable revelations on Priesthood in the *Doctrine and Covenants* before referred to, Sections 2 and 13, are missing, and Chapter 28 gives no hint of the Restoration which, if actual, had been known for four years. More than four hundred words were added to this revelation of August, 1829 in Section 27 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, the additions made to include the names of heavenly visitors and two separate ordinations. The *Book of Commandments* gives the duties of Elders, Priests, Teachers, and Deacons and refers to Joseph’s apostolic calling but there is no mention of Melchizedek Priesthood, High Priesthood, Seventies, High Priests, nor High Councilors. These words were later inserted into the revelation on Church organization and government of April, 1830, making it appear that they were known at that date, but they do not appear in the original, Chapter 24 of the *Book of Commandments* three years later. Similar interpolations were made in the revelations known as Sections 42 and 68. (*Problems in Mormon Text*, by LaMar Petersen, pages 7-8)

At this point the reader may be interested in taking a closer look at the photographs showing the changes made in Joseph Smith’s revelations which we presented in *The Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 1—see CHANGES E (page 143), I (page 154), K (page 157), M (page 158), N (page 158), O (page 160), P (page 160), Q (page 166), and R (page 169).

## Aaronic

The Mormon Church claims to have the Aaronic Priesthood; the Bible, however, makes it clear that it was fulfilled at the death of Christ. In Hebrews 7:11 to 14 we read:

If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar.

For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

Members of the early Christian Church were not ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood, neither is there any mention of the Aaronic Priesthood in the Book of Mormon. The Mormon Apostle Parley P. Pratt admitted that the Nephites did not have the Aaronic Priesthood: “. . . the Aaronic Priesthood is **no where pretended** to in the Book of Mormon” (*Writings of Parley Parker Pratt*, page 209).

At any rate, the Mormon Church claims that on May 15, 1829, John the Baptist conferred the Aaronic Priesthood on Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Section 13 of the *Doctrine and Covenants* is cited as evidence that the Aaronic Priesthood was conferred on Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. We must remember, however, that this section did not appear in the revelations as they were originally printed in the *Book of Commandments*. It was published in the *Times and Seasons* on August 1, 1842, but it was not added to the *Doctrine and Covenants* until 1876.

Section 27 of the *Doctrine and Covenants* might lead one to believe that in 1830 the ordination of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to the Aaronic Priesthood by John the Baptist was common knowledge in the Church. In verse 8 we read:

Which John I have sent unto you, my servants, Joseph Smith, Jun., and Oliver Cowdery, to ordain you unto the first priesthood, which you have received, that you might be called and ordained even as Aaron.

Since the introduction to this revelation states that it was given in 1830, Mormon writers use it in their attempt to prove the Restoration of the Priesthood. A careful examination of this revelation, however, reveals that it has been falsified. Verse 8 was not in the revelation as it was originally published in the *Book of Commandments*. It was added to the *Doctrine and Covenants* in 1835 (see Change K, *Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 1, page 157)

## Melchizedek

It is claimed by the Mormon leaders that before the Church was organized Peter, James and John restored the Melchizedek Priesthood. The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards admitted that the exact date of this ordination is not known:

While we are a record-keeping people, as the Lord commanded, nevertheless our records are not complete. . . . we do **not** have the date that Peter, James and John conferred the Melchizedek Priesthood upon them. (Letter from LeGrand Richards, dated September 26, 1960)

The *Doctrine and Covenants*, 27:12 is cited as proof that the Melchizedek Priesthood was conferred at a very early date:

And also with Peter, and James, and John, whom I have sent unto you, by whom I have ordained you and confirmed you to be apostles, . . .

This verse, however, did not appear in the revelation when it was published in the *Book of Commandments* in 1833. It was added into the *Doctrine and Covenants*, and therefore it cannot be cited as proof that the Melchizedek Priesthood was in the Church at the time the revelation was given (see Change K, *Case*, Vol. 1, page 157).

It is claimed that an Elder is an office in the Melchizedek Priesthood, although neither the Bible or the Book of Mormon teach this. In the *Doctrine and Covenants* 107:7 we read: “The office of an **elder** comes under the priesthood of Melchizedek.” There is evidence, however, that in the beginning the Elders of the Mormon Church did not have the Melchizedek Priesthood. Joseph Smith himself made this statement concerning a conference held in June, 1831:

... the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood was manifested and conferred **for the first time** upon several of the **elders**. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 1, pages 175-176)

John Whitmer, who was Church Historian, confirmed the fact that the Elders were ordained to the High Priesthood on June 3, 1831:

June 3, 1831. A general conference was called ... the Lord made manifest to Joseph that it was necessary that such of the **elders** as were considered worthy, should be ordained to the high priesthood. ... these were ordained to the high priesthood, namely: Lyman Wight, Sidney Rigdon, John Murdock, Reynolds Cahoon, Harvey Whitlock, and Hyrum Smith were ordained by Joseph Smith, Junior, except Sidney Rigdon. (*John Whitmer's History*, Chapter 7)

John Corrill also stated that the Melchizedek Priesthood was first introduced in the church at that conference:

About fifty **elders** met, which was about all the **elders** that then belonged to the church. ... The Malchisedic priesthood was then for the **first time introduced**, and conferred on several of the **elders**. (*A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints*, 1839, page 18)

George A. Smith, speaking in the Tabernacle in 1864, also mentioned this conference:

He [Ezra Booth] was present when the **elders first received the ordination of the high priesthood**. They met together in June, 1831, ... the manifestation of the power of God being on Joseph, he set apart some of the **elders** to the High Priesthood. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, page 4)

If the Melchizedek Priesthood is really necessary it is certainly odd that the elders were able to function from the organization of the church until June, 1831, without it. All evidence points to the fact that the Melchizedek Priesthood did not come from the hands of Peter, James and John in 1829, but rather from the mind of Sydney Rigdon in Ohio in 1831. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made the following admission concerning the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood:

... there is **no definite account** of the event in the history of the Prophet Joseph, or, for matter of that, **in any of our annals**, ... (*History of the Church*, Vol. 1, page 40, footnote)

In trying to prove that there was a restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood, Roberts cites two statements by Oliver Cowdery. These statements are of little value, however, since they were not made until the late 1840's and were not published until some time later.

## High Priests

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made the following statements concerning the ordination of High Priests in the Mormon Church:

The next grievous error which crept into the church was in ordaining high priests in June, 1831. This error was introduced at the instigation of Sydney Rigdon. The office of high priests was **never spoken of**, and never thought of being established in the church until Rigdon came in. Remember that we had been preaching from August 1829, until June, 1831—almost two years—and had baptized about 2,000 members into the Church of Christ, and had not one high priest. During 1829, several times we were told by Brother Joseph that an elder was the highest office in the church ... In Kirtland, Ohio, in 1831, Rigdon would expound the Old Testament scriptures of the Bible and Book of Mormon (in his way) to Joseph, concerning the priesthood, high priests, etc., and would persuade Brother Joseph to inquire of the Lord about this doctrine, and of course a revelation would always come just as they desired it. Rigdon finally persuaded Brother Joseph to believe that the high priests which had such great power in ancient times, should be in the Church of Christ to-day. He had Brother Joseph inquire of the Lord about it, and they received an answer according to their erring desires. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, page 35)

High Priests were only in the church before Christ; and to have this office in the “Church of Christ” is not according to the teachings of Christ in either of the sacred books: Christ himself is our great and last High Priest. Brethren—I will tell you one thing which alone should settle this matter in your minds; it is this: you cannot find in the New Testament part of the Bible or Book of Mormon where one single high priest was ever in the Church of Christ. It is a grievous sin to have such an office in the church. As well might you add to the teachings of Christ—circumcision—offering up the sacrifice of animals—or break the ordinances of Christ in any other way by going back to the old law of Moses. (*Ibid.*, pages 62-63)

In Kirtland, Ohio, in June, 1831, ... the first High Priests were ordained ... When they were ordained, right there at the time, the devil caught and bound Harvey Whitlock so he could not speak, his face twisted into demon-like shape. Also John Burdock and others were caught by the devil in a similar manner. Now brethren, do you not see that the displeasure of the Lord was upon their proceedings in ordaining High Priests? Of course it was. These facts are recorded in the History of the Church—written by my brother, John Whitmer, who was the regularly appointed church historian ... Brother John was himself ordained a High Priest at that time, so he was in error and could not see it; but he saw it very clearly in 1848, when the Lord opened our eyes to see and understand it ... Brother John gives an account of a prophecy uttered by Lyman Wight just after Brother Joseph ordained him a High Priest, which prophecy will prove to be a false prophecy. Brother John's history of the church says as follows: “He (Joseph) laid his hands upon Lyman Wight and ordained him to the high priesthood after the holy order of God. And the spirit fell upon Lyman, and he prophesied concerning the coming of Christ. He said that there were some in this congregation that should live until the Savior should descend from Heaven with a shout, with all the holy angels with him, etc.” The early future will determine as to whether this prophecy was true or false. (*Ibid.*, pages 64-65)

Hiram Page, one of the eight witnesses to the Book of Mormon, also repudiated the idea of High Priests in the Church after the time of Christ. He stated: “. . . the office of High Priest does **not** belong to the church of Christ under the gospel dispensation, . . .” (*The Olive Branch*, Springfield, Ill., August, 1849, page 28)

## First Presidency

The Mormon writer Bruce R. McConkie states that the Mormon Church “conforms, for instance, to the New Testament pattern of the Lord’s Church. In it is found the same authority, the same organization, the same ordinances, the same teachings and doctrines that were found in the primitive Church (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1958, page 129). If we carefully examine this claim, we find that it cannot be supported by the Bible. For instance, the Mormon Church is led by a First Presidency, yet the Bible says nothing about a First Presidency. The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards admits that the Bible does not mention a First Presidency, but he suggests that it may have been composed of Peter, James and John:

We find **no direct statement in the Bible** to the effect that a **presidency** of the Church was appointed by the Savior to stand at the head of the Church after his departure. However, the fact that he sent Peter, James, and John back to the earth in this dispensation to restore the Melchizedek Priesthood. . . . would indicate that they held a position of preference over the other Apostles, which, by virtue of their administration in this dispensation, would indicate that they were the presidency of the Melchizedek Priesthood and of the Church in the meridian of time, following the ascension of Jesus. (*A Marvelous Work and A Wonder*, Salt Lake City, 1966, page 140)

Even if a person were to accept Peter, James and John as the First Presidency of the primitive Church, this would still present a serious problem. The Bible states that Jesus chose twelve Apostles and that Peter, James and John were included among these men, whereas the Mormon Church has a First Presidency composed of three men in addition to the “Council of the Twelve.” Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, admits that there is a difference:

He also appointed three of these Twelve to take the keys of presidency. Peter, James, and John, acted as the First Presidency . . . All the information we have indicates that they served in this capacity while serving at the same time as three of the Council of the Twelve.

In this last dispensation we have received the **added** information, and **perhaps the added order of priesthood**, and we have in the Church of Jesus Christ today the quorum of the First Presidency, **separate from the Council of the Apostles**. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, page 152)

The Mormon Church has another problem with regard to the First Presidency. One of Joseph Smith’s revelations states that there are to be three in the First Presidency: “Of

the Melchizedek Priesthood, three Presiding High Priests . . . form a quorum of the Presidency of the Church” (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 107:22). Under the leadership of David O. McKay, however, the First Presidency was expanded to six members. The *Salt Lake Tribune* for January 19, 1970, reported:

In October, 1965, because of the “increasing work load on church leadership and rapid growth of the Church,” President McKay appointed two new counselors to the First Presidency. They are Joseph Fielding Smith and Thorpe B. Isaacson.

During General Conference in April, 1968, Alvin R. Dyer also was elevated to the First Presidency, raising the total membership to **six**.

In his book, *Doctrines of Salvation*, written before David O. McKay enlarged the First Presidency, Joseph Fielding Smith stated that the Lord had never called more than the Twelve and a Presidency of three: “. . . at **no place** has the Lord said that others **more than** the Twelve and a Presidency of **three** should be called (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, page 153). In spite of this statement, Joseph Fielding Smith accepted a position in McKay’s enlarged First Presidency. At McKay’s death, however, Joseph Fielding Smith became the tenth President of the Mormon Church and immediately cut down the number in the First Presidency to three—his counselors are Harold B. Lee and Nathan Eldon Tanner. This move seems to show that Smith feels that McKay made a mistake in enlarging the First Presidency to six.

The reader will notice that McKay added extra counselors because of “increased work load on church leadership and rapid growth of the Church.” How can Joseph Fielding Smith justify the elimination of these counselors when the Church is supposed to be larger today than it was in 1965?

As we indicated earlier, the Bible does not support the idea of a First Presidency. While this presents a problem for Mormon apologists, the problem becomes even more serious when we learn that the Book of Mormon does not have a word to say about a first presidency. Even worse than this, however, is the fact that Joseph Smith’s revelations were changed to support the idea of a First Presidency. For instance, in a revelation given March, 1831, we read: “And then ye shall begin to be gathered . . . every man according to his family, . . . as is appointed to him by the bishop and elders of the church, . . .” (*Book of Commandments*, Chapter 51, verse 6). In the *Doctrine and Covenants* this has been changed to include the Presidency: “. . . and then shall ye begin to be gathered . . . every man according to his family, . . . as is appointed to him by the **presidency and the** bishop of the church, . . .” (*Doctrine and Covenants* 48:6). In a revelation given November, 1831, the word “presidency” was not included, but when this revelation was reprinted in the *Doctrine and Covenants* it was added in several places (see Change R, *Case*, Vol. 1, page 169).



## Age of Ordination

In the Mormon Church twelve-year-old boys are ordained deacons. This is the first step in the Priesthood. This seems to be in direct contradiction to the Bible, for in 1 Timothy 3:12 we read: “Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.” Joseph Fielding Smith tries to explain this contradiction by stating:

It was the judgment of Paul that a deacon in that day should be a married man. That does **not** apply to our day. Conditions were different in the days of Paul. In that day a minister was not considered qualified to take part in the ministry until he was 30 years of age. Under those conditions deacons, teachers, and priests were mature men. This is **not** the requirement today. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, pages 109-110)

Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy, stated:

It is the practice of the Church in this dispensation . . . to confer the Aaronic Priesthood upon worthy young men who are 12 years of age and to ordain them to the office of a deacon in that priesthood. . . . In the meridian of time the needs of the ministry were such that adult brethren were ordained deacons. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1958, page 170)

Joseph Smith’s own revelations, however, seem to show that he had mature men in mind when he spoke of deacons. In the *Doctrine and Covenants* 84:111 we read: “. . . the **deacons** and teachers should be appointed to watch over the church, to be standing ministers unto the church.” On October 6, 1854, Brigham Young taught that deacons were to be married:

It is **not** the business of an ignorant young man, of no experience in family matters, to inquire into the circumstances of families, and know the wants of every person. . . . it is **not the business of boys to do this**; but select a man who has got a family to be a **deacon**, whose wife can go with him, and assist him in administering to the needy in the ward. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, page 89)

Although Brigham Young publicly taught that deacons should be married, he ordained his own sons to be Apostles when they were still young men—one son was eighteen but the other was only eleven. In the book, *Church Chronology*, we find the following:

YOUNG, Brigham, jun.; born Dec. 18, 1836; baptized in 1845, by his father, Brigham Young; ordained a Seventy; **ordained an Apostle** Nov. 22, 1855, by Brigham Young, and admitted into the Council of Twelve Apostles Oct. 9, 1868, being set apart by Brigham Young.

YOUNG, John W.; born Oct. 1, 1844; ordained **an Apostle** Nov. 22, 1855, by Pres. Brigham Young, but has never been admitted into the Council of Twelve Apostles. (*Church Chronology*, compiled by Andrew Jenson, Assistant Church Historian, Salt Lake City, 1899, page xxviii)

Heber C. Kimball, First Counselor to Brigham Young, ordained his boy a high priest when he was only about 6 years old. This boy died when he was fourteen, and Heber C. Kimball made this statement at his funeral:

Joseph was a kind-hearted, obedient, good boy. He was fourteen years of age the third day of last April, . . . Joseph was never cross, he was always pleasant to all persons. **Eight years ago** he came near dying; I was impressed to **ordain him a high priest**. I ordained him, and I do know that that had a saving effect upon the boy, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 10, pages 370-372)

In the autobiography and journal of Joseph Lee Robinson we find that Robinson ordained his infant son, and when he asked the Patriarch John Smith about it he told him that he had done the same thing on several occasions.

In this chapter we have covered some of the problems one encounters when studying the Mormon Priesthood. There are many other problems and inconsistencies which we cannot cover for lack of space, but we highly recommend LaMar Petersen’s *Problems in Mormon Text* to those interested in pursuing the matter further. Hal Hougey’s *Latter-Day Saints—Where Did You Get Your Authority?* also contains some very interesting information of this subject.

## 17. OLD TESTAMENT PRACTICES

There are several Old Testament practices that have found their way into Mormonism; one of these is the practice of cursing ones enemies. Both the Bible and the Book of Mormon state that this practice was to cease with the coming of Christ. Now that Christ has come, we are supposed to rely upon him and let him take all hate out of our hearts. If we have no hate in our hearts, we will have no desire to curse our enemies or wish any evil upon them. The words that Jesus spoke in the Sermon of the Mount are also recorded in the Book of Mormon:

And behold it is written also, that thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy;

But behold I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you. (3 Nephi 12:43-44)

In the Bible we read as follows: “Bless them which persecute you; **bless, and curse not**” (Romans 12:14).

In spite of these clear teachings in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith gave a revelation which sanctioned the cursing of ones enemies:

And inasmuch as mine enemies come against you . . . ye shall **curse them**;

And whomsoever **ye curse**, I will curse, **and ye shall avenge me of mine enemies.** (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 103, verses 24-25)

### Wine and Curses

The cursing of enemies was actually carried out in the Kirtland Temple. The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith gave this account:

Now I will illustrate this still further. The Lord did actually reveal one principle to us there, and that one principle was apparently so simple, and so foolish in their eyes, that a great many apostatized over it, because it was so contrary to their notions and views. It was this, after the people had fasted all day, they sent out and got wine and bread, and blessed them, and distributed them

to the multitude, that is, to the whole assembly of the brethren, and they ate and drank, and prophesied, and bore testimony, and continued so to do until some of the **High Council** of Missouri stepped into the stand, and, as righteous Noah did when he awoke from his wine, commenced to **curse their enemies**. You never felt such a shock go through any house or company in the world as went through that. There was almost a rebellion because men would get up and **curse** their enemies; . . . The Lord dared not then reveal anything more; He had **given us all we could swallow**; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, page 216)

One man, William Harris, who left the Mormon Church made this comment concerning the cursing:

In the evening, they met for the endowment. The fast was then broken by eating light wheat bread, and drinking as much wine as they saw proper. Smith knew well how to infuse the spirit which they expected to receive; so he encouraged the brethren to drink freely, telling them that the wine was consecrated, and would not make them drunk. As may be supposed, they drank to the purpose. After this they began to prophecy, pronouncing blessings upon their friends, and **curses** upon their enemies. If I should be so unhappy as to go to the regions of the damned, I never expect to hear language more awful, or more becoming the infernal pit, than was uttered that night. The curses were pronounced principally upon the clergy of the present day, and upon the Jackson county mob in Missouri. After spending the night in alternate blessings and cursings, the meeting adjourned. (*Mormonism Portrayed*, by William Harris, Warsaw, Ill., 1841, pages 31-32)

When Joseph Smith wrote the *History of the Church*, he told of the cursing in the Kirtland Temple; however, his words have been censored in modern editions of the *History of the Church*. In the *Millennial Star*, Vol. 15, page 727, Joseph Smith's words were given as follows:

The brethren began to prophesy upon each other's heads, and **cursings** upon the enemies of Christ, who inhabit Jackson county, Missouri; . . .

In modern editions of the *History of the Church*, Joseph Smith's words have been censored to read as follows:

The brethren began to prophesy upon each other's heads, and upon the enemies of Christ, who inhabited Jackson county, Missouri; . . . (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 431)

Notice that the word "cursings" has been removed from this statement, making it appear that they just prophesied concerning the inhabitants of Jackson County, instead of cursing them.

Benjamin F. Johnson made this comment:

In Missouri we were taught to "pray for our enemies, that God would damn them, and give us power to **kill them**." (Letter from Benjamin F. Johnson to George S. Gibbs, 1903, mimeographed copy)

The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith stated:

As I remarked, we were then very pious, and we **prayed the Lord to kill the mob**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 107)

In the *Millennial Star*, Vol. 19, page 360, Joseph Smith was quoted as saying: "Preached on the hill near the Temple, . . . and **pronounced a curse on** the merchants and the rich, who would not assist in building it." When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church* it was changed to read: "Preached on the hill near the Temple, . . . and **reproved** the merchants and the rich who would not assist in building it (*History of the Church*, Vol. 4, page 601).

Some other statements concerning the cursing of enemies were left uncensored in modern editions of the *History of the Church*. Joseph Smith made the following statement in 1842:

. . . to the apostates and enemies, I will give a lashing every opportunity, and I will **curse** them. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 5, page 139)

In the *History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 346, we find the following:

President Brigham Young also spoke very pointedly and very truly about Dr. Foster and others. Dr. Foster was **cursed**, and the people cried "Amen."

On September 20, 1846, Hosea Stout reported the following in his diary:

Brigham said that he did not feel very religious now . . . he said that instead of praying for our enemies he would pray that our enemies & all dissenters might be sent to hell cross lots. (*On the Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844-1861*, University of Utah Press, 1964, Vol. 1, page 195)

John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, made this statement in a sermon delivered in the Tabernacle in 1858:

. . . they were so damnable, mean, and cowardly as to make war on the sick and infirm that could not leave. The poor, miserable, cursed, damned scoundrels, I pray that they may go to hell. [The whole congregation shouted "Amen."] (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 7, page 122)

Heber C. Kimball, First Councilor to Brigham Young, often cursed his enemies from the pulpit. He even went so far as to curse the President of the United States. Below are some extracts from his sermons:

There are men and women in this congregation of that stamp. I wish I had some stones; I want to pelt your cursed heads, for you lie like hell. . . .

There is a poor curse who has written the bigger part of those lies which have been printed in the States; and **I curse him, in the name of Israel's God, and by the priesthood and authority of Jesus Christ**; and the disease that is in him shall sap and dry up the fountain of life and eat him up. Some of you may think that he has not the disease I allude to; but he is full of pox from the crown of his head to the point of its beginning. That is the **curse** of that man; it shall be so, and all Israel shall say, Amen. [The vast congregation of Saints said, "Amen."] . . . May God Almighty **curse** such men, [Voices all through the congregation: "Amen!"] and women, and every damned thing there is upon the earth that opposes this people. I tell you I feel to curse them to-day. [Voice: "And they shall be cursed."] Yes, they will be; and the Devil shall have full possession of every man and woman that raises the tongue to sympathise with those poor curses. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 32)

Will the President that sits in the chair of state be tipped from his seat? Yes, he will die an untimely death, and God Almighty will **curse** him; and He will also curse his successor, if he takes the same stand; and he will curse all those that are his coadjutors, and all who sustain him. . . . God Almighty will **curse them**, and **I curse them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ**, according to my calling; and if there is any virtue in my calling, they shall be **cursed**, every man that lifts his heel against us from this day forth. [Voices: "Amen."] (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 133)

And may God Almighty **curse** our enemies. [Voices: "Amen."] I feel **to curse my enemies**; and when God won't bless them, I do not think he will ask me to bless them. If I did, it would be to put the poor curses **to death** who have brought death and destruction on me and my brethren . . . Poor rotten curses! And the **President of the United States**, inasmuch as he has turned against us . . . he **shall be cursed, in the name of Israel's God**, and he shall not rule over this nation. . . . and **I curse him** and all his coadjutors in his cursed deeds, **in the name of Jesus and by the authority of the Holy Priesthood**; and all Israel shall say amen. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 95)

. . . I feel, in the name and by the authority of Jesus Christ and my calling, to **curse** that man that lifts his heel against my God and his cause and kingdom; and the curse of God shall be upon him: the angels of God shall chase him, and he shall have no peace. The **President** of the United States and his coadjutors that have caused this thing shall never rest again, for **they shall go to hell**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 6, page 38)

John D. Lee reported in his journal that Brigham Young made the following remarks:

. . . Pres. B. Young arose & said . . . that Miller, the Omaha & Ota agent was stirring them up to commit depredations on our cattle & for this he cursed him in the name of Iseral'[s] god with corruption & rotenous of Bones & that he should go Down to Hell & all the Saints Said Amen. . . . He then cu[r]sed all the gentiles that inhabited the Pottowatony Lands that lived in the state of Mo. with the Same curse . . . (*A Mormon Chronicle, The Diaries of John D. Lee*, Vol. 1, page 27)

In Romans 12:20 we read: "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; . . ." According to Charles L. Walker, Brigham Young taught just the opposite: "Sun., Apr. 28. Went up to the Tabernacle . . . Bro. Brigham . . . said that those who sell their provisions to feed our enemies either man or woman should be **cursed**, and said he, **I curse them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ** and the congregation shouted, Amen." ("Diary of Charles L. Walker," 1853-1902, excerpts typed, page 13)

Jesus said "love your enemies," but the Mormon Apostle George A. Smith remarked: "You must know that I love my friends, and God Almighty knows that **I do hate my enemies**" (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 110).

Jesus said that we are to pray for our enemies. Heber C. Kimball prayed for his enemies in the following manner:

We also pray for those who do not feel favorably disposed to thy work—may thy blessings **not** attend them, but may they go backward and not forward, may they **wither** and **not** increase, and may the strength that they might have received, through their faithfulness to thy work, be multiplied and divided amongst these thy servants, who are determined to keep thy commandments, and sanctify their affections unto thee. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, page 34)

Drummond and those miserable scoundrels, and some that are now in our midst—how do I feel towards them? Pray for them? Yes, **I pray that God Almighty would send them to hell**. Some say across lots; but I would like to have them take a round about road, and be as long as they can be in going there. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 89)

## Animal Sacrifice

Animal sacrifice after the death of Christ is another Old Testament practice that has found a place in Mormon beliefs. It was Joseph Smith himself who taught this doctrine. It is found in the *History of the Church*, Vol. 4, page 211:

It will be necessary here to make a few observations on the doctrine set forth in the above quotation, and it is generally supposed that sacrifice was entirely done away when the Great Sacrifice . . . was offered up, and that there will be no necessity for the ordinance of sacrifice in future: but those who assert this are certainly not acquainted with the duties, privileges and authority of the priesthood, or with the Prophets. . . .

**These sacrifices**, as well as every ordinance belonging to the Priesthood, will, when the Temple of the Lord shall be built, . . . be fully **restored and attended to** in all their powers, ramifications, and blessings. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 4, page 211)

In the Journal of Wandle Mace the following is found:

Joseph told them to go to Kirtland, and cleanse and purify a certain room in the Temple, that they **must kill a lamb and offer a sacrifice unto the Lord** which should prepare them to ordain Willard Richards a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. ("Journal of Wandle Mace," page 32, microfilm copy at the Brigham Young University Library)

Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, still upholds the doctrine of animal sacrifice after the death of Christ. He states as follows:

Now in the nature of things, the law of **sacrifice** will have to be **restored**. . . . Sacrifice by the **shedding of blood** was instituted in the days of Adam and of necessity **will have to be restored**. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, page 94)

It is interesting to note that even though the Mormon Church teaches animal sacrifice after the death of Christ, they cannot find any support for this doctrine in the Book of Mormon. In fact, the Book of Mormon condemns it in the strongest terms. In 3 Nephi 9:19 Jesus was supposed to have said the following:

And ye shall offer up unto me no more **the shedding of blood**; yea, **your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings**.

There are many other Old Testament practices in Mormonism. This should be sufficient, however, to convince the reader that the Mormon Church leaders have sometimes taken the teachings of the Old Testament in preference to the teachings of Christ.

## 18. MISSIONARIES.

Since the time of Joseph Smith the Mormon leaders have sent missionaries throughout the world to gain converts to the Church. The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith once stated that a member of the Mormon Church had been excommunicated for refusing to go on a mission:

It was at the same Council that Daniel Copley, a timid young man, who had been ordained a Priest, and required to go and preach the Gospel, was called to an account **for not going on his mission**. The young man said he was too weak to attempt to preach, and the **Council cut him off the Church**. I wonder what our missionaries now would think of so rigid a discipline as was given at that time thirty years ago, under the immediate supervision of the **Prophet**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, page 8)

Under Brigham Young the Church continued to send missionaries throughout the world, but Young did not seem to be very concerned about the quality of the missionaries he sent out. In an article published in the *Valley Tan* on April 26, 1859, it was claimed that Brigham Young was sending men on missions to get rid of them:

We have heard it intimated that it is the custom of the church whenever they want to rid themselves of bad elders, without resorting to violent means, the Conference politely gives them a call to go on a mission, a species of exile which, while it relieves them from their presence at home, is not the most complementary or befitting way to propagate even Mormonism.

Brigham Young did not attempt to deny this charge; instead, he frankly admitted that he “sent men on missions to get rid of them”:

Some of you wondered why I sent Thomas Bullock to take your names; I wanted to know the men who were coaxing hell into our midst, for I wish to send them to China, to the East Indies, or to where they cannot get back, at least for five years. . . . we will **send off the poor curses on a mission, and then the devil may have them**, and we do not care how soon they apostatize, after they get as far as California. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 3, page 239)

Keep away from court houses; no decent man will go there unless he goes as a witness, or is in some manner compelled to go. I know that many are obliged to go, but those who creep around to see what is going on, let me tell you, the **devil** has possession of them. I wish such persons to go to California, if they wish to. I counsel you to keep

away from courts, we have got the names of those who have attended that court room, and we will **send those characters on long missions, for we want to get rid of them**, and we do not care whether they apostatize or not. . . . People abroad may say, “Why don’t you send us all good men?” Do you believe them? No, you do not, when we send them. We wish them to stay here, only those whom it is necessary to have go, but we **have no business here for those poor miserable devils**. (Ibid., page 241)

We have at times **sent men on missions to get rid of them**; but they have generally come back. Some think it is an imposition upon the world to send such men among them. But which is best to keep them here **to pollute others**, or to send them where pollution is more prevalent? . . . We have tried to turn the filthy ones out of the flock, but they will not always stay out. (Ibid., Vol. 7, pages 228-229)

Things have changed a great deal since Brigham Young’s time. The Mormon leaders no longer send men on missions to get rid of them, although in some cases they might be sent to help reform them. Bruce R. McConkie states:

Foreign missionaries drop their temporal pursuits, travel to the nations of the earth, and for periods of two or three years, without financial help from the Church, devote their full time to proclaiming the message of the restoration. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, page 509)

Most of the missionaries are young men just out of high school—for example, Lynn Kenneth Packer was 19 years old at the time he began his mission (*A Missionary Experience*, page 9). Except for a “week’s general training in the Salt Lake City mission home” (Ibid., page 9), the missionary receives no formal preparation before going to the field. In 1961 Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became the tenth President of the Mormon Church, made these revealing statements:

The missionary of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a modern miracle. In the world the idea prevails that a man must go to school, college, get an education, be trained and get a degree to qualify him to preach and to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ, as he understands it. We call our young men and women at the beginning, really, of life, . . . We send them out into the world untrained, . . . They are unprepared, insofar as education and knowledge are concerned. **Most of them have never read the Book of Mormon**, a great part of them, **if not the greater part have never read the New Testament**. They are **not** familiar with the

**revelations** in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. I find this out when I interview them. But they have one thing that the world does not have, and cannot have, and that's a **testimony** and the determination to go out into the field, as unprepared as they are, and spend two or maybe more years bearing witness to the restoration of the gospel, expounding the scriptures, as they **learn them**. (*Improvement Era*, October, 1961, page 716)

Joseph H. Weston, who was converted to the Church in 1948, stated that before the missionaries left for the field they were given a letter containing 42 "strict rules of personal conduct." One of these rules reads as follows: "26. Never say in public or in private that you do not know the gospel is true" (*These Amazing Mormons!* Salt Lake City, 1961, page 64).

Because the Mormon missionaries go to the field almost unprepared—and perhaps for other reasons—the Mormon leaders have published a booklet entitled "A Uniform System For Teaching Investigators." This booklet contains six lessons which the missionary is supposed to memorize. William J. Whalen states:

Such is the six-lesson course of instruction completed by more than 100,000 men and women last year. Little is left to chance. The young missionaries are not encouraged to depart from the prescribed dialogue. The basis is simple memorization of dialogue and appropriate passages from the Bible and Book of Mormon. The subjects about which the typical Gentile may be most curious, such as polygamy and the Mormon temple rites, are not even mentioned. (*The Latter-day Saints in the Modern Day World*, by William J. Whalen, New York, 1964, page 243)

Lynn Kenneth Packer, who has served on a mission for the Church, made these statements:

The six lessons are to be memorized and then used, exclusively, for the entire mission of the missionary. Theoretically the only allowed deviation from the word-for-word dialog[ue] would be that of overcoming objections and explaining doctrine. . . . we discover that the use of the six discussions is compulsory. (*A Missionary Experience*, New York, 1969, page 138)

The reader will remember that the handbook even tells the missionaries how to bear their testimony (see photograph in *The Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 1, page 5):

2. Set your testimony apart.
  - a. Pause slightly.
  - b. Look contact in the eye.
  - c. Bear testimony in a natural tone of voice. (*A Uniform System For Teaching Investigators*, published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, page 3)

On pages 21-22 of *A Uniform System For Teaching Investigators*, we find the following:

Elder: The Church of Jesus Christ has been restored to the earth, Mr. Brown. I know and testify that these things we have discussed here are true.

Elder J: (Interrupting spontaneously) It has been a real pleasure for me to be here tonight and to participate in this discussion, Mr. Brown. I also know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God and that the true Church of Jesus Christ has been restored to the earth.

In a rebuttal to the handbook, Hal Hougey makes this interesting observation:

How can one interrupt "spontaneously" (by impulse, lack of prompting—*Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*) when he has previously been taught to do so by this manual? (*Mormon Missionary Handbook*, Concord, Calif., 1969, comment on page 21)

Lynn Kenneth Packer, who served on a mission for the Mormon Church, had a difficult time accepting the idea of a "memorized lesson plan":

. . . from a spiritual standpoint I found it hard to justify a memorized lesson plan with a scripture in the *Doctrine and Covenants* given as advice to missionaries:

"Neither take ye thought beforehand what ye shall say; but treasure up in your minds continually the words of life, and it shall be given you in the very hour that portion that shall be meted unto every man." (*A Missionary Experience*, page 24)

Because of his opposition to the missionary plan, Lynn Kenneth Packer found himself in trouble with the Mormon leaders. His uncle, Boyd K. Packer, an assistant to the Council of the Twelve, wrote him a letter in which he stated:

I do hope, Lynn, "that you will do the thing that you have been called and set apart to do . . . that is to proselyte for new members using the procedure and the plan that is given to you by the president of your mission, without any intention to alter it or change it or to try to encourage others to question it or alter it." (*Ibid.*, page 51)

Lynn Kenneth Packer continued to have trouble and finally wrote a letter home in which he stated:

. . . I don't believe that people can be converted with "6 easy lessons." I don't believe that the lessons are coming anywhere close to the point where the gospel can be taught really effectively. I don't believe that just because a contact stumbles through the lesson logic that he understands the gospel sufficiently to be baptized. . . . I stated that I was unwilling to comply with all that the mission asked of me. That doesn't mean that I wouldn't follow anything. It means I wouldn't do those things which failed to meet my standards or clashed with my principles. Pres. Allen said either I would do everything the mission asked or I would have to go home. If I don't (or won't) teach exclusively by the lessons, etc., then I would have to go home. (*Ibid.*, pages 85-86)

The Mormon leaders allowed Packer to finish his mission, but he was assigned to an "Indian reservation in Nevada." He states that "Owyhee had a reputation for being a place to send problem Elders" (*Ibid.*, page 95).

Lynn Kenneth Packer is apparently not the only missionary opposed to the “memorized lesson plan.” In a review of *A Missionary Experience*, Edward Geary quotes the following from “a current mission handbook”:

Sometimes missionaries feel they are restricted by being required to learn the discussions **word for word**. There was never a more fallacious train of reasoning. **Salesmen**, who are sent out to sell their products, must commit to memory certain lines by which they can be effective in conveying their product in just the right manner. Once they have learned their lines, then they can bring forth their personality in affecting the thoughts of others. **Actors** on a stage must learn their lines; and having once learned them they are in a position to use themselves through those lines to touch hearts and to convey feelings in a very moving manner. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1970, pages 103-104)

In a letter to President Allen, Lynn Kenneth Packer stated: “I believe that the present program is nothing more than a spitualized [*sic*] sales program, constructed for the weak to operate” (*A Missionary Experience*, page 93). On page 71 of the same book, Packer made this statement: “President Howard Allen was running nothing more than a super-sales program. Everything was baptism.” Mr. Packer made these interesting observations concerning the missionary program:

I felt emphasis on baptism was too much and emphasis on repentance too little. (*A Missionary Experience*, page 25)

I finished learning the six lessons. I only knew the first five word perfect because we rarely gave the sixth. Usually if someone came as far as the third or fourth they were baptized before the sixth. . . .

The following is a typical letter sent to us during January from our traveling Elders. I had to pinch myself to see if I was really seeing missionaries write like that.

Brethren:

Hark! Another rumor, this time nasty, is pervading the zone stating that the elders in the Great Yosemite Zone are not Bears but Kittens—going “Purrrr-Splink” instead of the honorable, He-man type swinging Bear call of “Grrrr-Splash” as we have been in the past! Can there be any truth in this rumor?????As Mumsie & Popsie (?) we deny any such thing in behalf of the zone—RIGHT?!!!!!!

FLASH BULLETIN: from the Bell Wire Service (Mumsie Bear, reporter) “Fresno District Ahead in First Discussions Given” With Fresno Dist. acting as vanguard, picking up 3 families for a 5.75/ area average, they nose out San Joaquin Dist., who is close behind with 5.66/ area. . . .

Adios amigobears—from the lair of two Grrrr-Bears (not she-bears or else we’d eat you all up).

Thought for the day: “He who works not, cannot pray”

P. S. Let’s be up to date on study programs when E. Monson arrives.

(Ibid., pages 90-91)

No doubt is left as to the effectiveness of the present plan, of course this depends on who means what by effective. If the number of baptisms is our criterion, then the present system with the program which backs it up is nearly ideal. But as far as honor and actual conversion

goes, then the plan’s effectiveness might be argued. (Ibid., pages 138-139)

Lynn Kenneth Packer states: “In the missionary lesson we try to prove the LDS Church is the only true church” (Ibid., page 14). In proving that the LDS Church is the only true church, the missionary is supposed to attack all other churches as false. Conclusion number nine, which the contact is supposed to reach, is: “There was a complete apostacy and **my church is false** (*A Uniform System For Teaching Investigators*, page 9). William J. Whalen makes the following comments concerning this matter:

Mormon missionaries generally labor among people who already profess some belief in Christianity. Clergymen of other denominations often accuse the eager Mormon missionaries of sheep stealing but the Mormons believe that they are simply building on a previous belief in God, in Jesus Christ, and in the Bible to bring the potential convert to a knowledge of the restoration of the true Church in these latter-days. (*The Latter-day Saints in the Modern Day World*, page 231)

None of the present Christian churches except the LDS Church is said to have apostles, authority to teach or baptize, or the valid priesthood. This frontal attack on all other Christian churches is what arouses the Church of England clergymen and others. Except in a few Pacific islands and Japan, the Mormons concentrate their mission activities among people who are at least nominally Christian. (Ibid., page 240)

Stanley P. Hirshon made this statement concerning the Mormon missionary system:

. . . the Mormons developed—and still maintain—a unique missionary system. The church kept no medical missionaries in Africa like David Livingstone and Albert Schweitzer. Nor did it send teachers or humanitarians to aid the Australian aborigines. Mormon missionaries . . . served two years usually among people who already believed in the divinity of Jesus Christ. (*The Lion of the Lord*, page 104)

On January 19, 1962, *Time Magazine* reported the following:

Man’s time on earth is running out, missionary leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints concluded at a convention six months ago. They resolved to make a last big push for conversions. . . . the most notable Mormon success came in . . . Great Britain, where T. (for Thomas) Boring Woodbury V, 53, is mission president. . . . Woodbury called for more missionaries from Salt Lake City, pioneered a cram course in Mormon dogma that reduced the prebaptism indoctrination time from weeks to days. To spur hard-working missionaries toward greater efforts, Woodbury coined football-style “yells” and such upbeat slogans as “Have Baptism, Will Travel.” Mormons who exceeded their quotas of baptisms were allowing into an “Extra



Mile Club,” honored at hearty dinners given by Woodbury and his wife Beulah, 48, whom he calls “Bubbles.” . . . Woodbury’s ascetic missionaries—they neither smoke nor drink tea, coffee or liquor—are generally admired by rival churchmen for their selflessness and zeal. British clergymen are less keen on Woodbury’s hard-sell style of making converts. Last year the Church of England assembly labeled Mormon missionaries “undesirables,” and the Anglican student chaplain at the University of Durham recently criticized the “well meant but over-zealous attempts of overeager Mormon missionaries.”

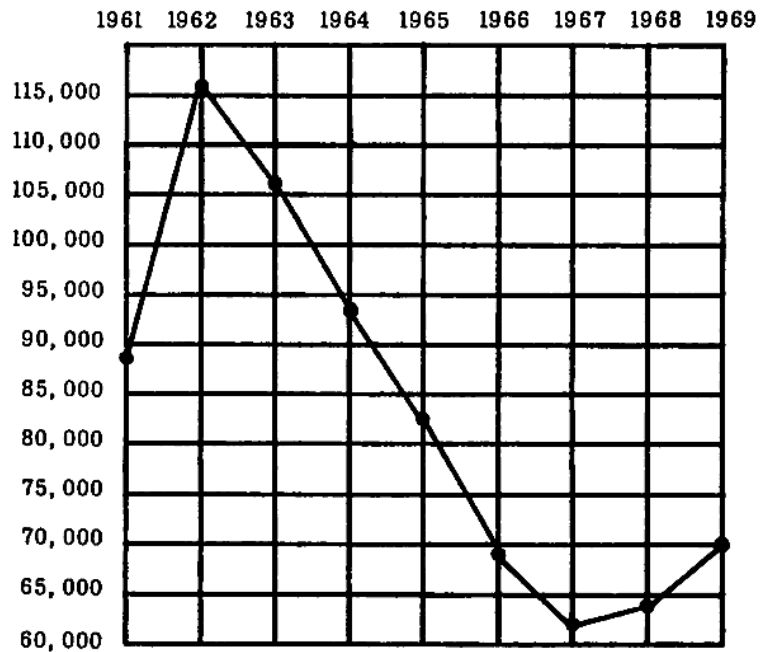
Woodbury shrugs off the attacks, and so do his superiors back home in Salt Lake City. “By Woodbury is a great leader,” says Missions Director Henry Moyle. . . . This week, as Woodbury rounds out his three-year tour of duty, a new president . . . is on his way to London: Marion Duff Hanks, . . . Hanks plans a somewhat softer sell. (*Time Magazine*, January 19, 1962, pages 57-58)

### 10,000,000 Mormons?

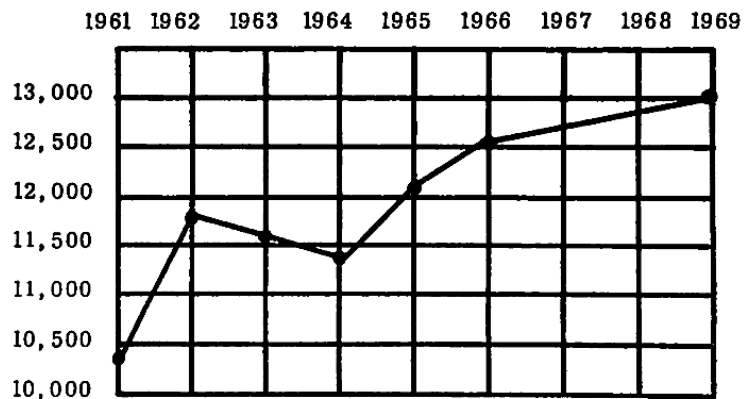
The Mormon Church leaders now claim that the church has almost 3,000,000 members, and they predict

that if they continue to grow at the same rate they will have 10,000,000 members by 2000 A. D. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, October 21, 1967, page 1). While we feel that the idea of 10,000,000 Mormons by 2000 A.D. is rather fantastic, we must admit that the missionary system has been very effective. Nevertheless, there is evidence which seems to indicate that the missionary effort has reached its peak and the number of new converts is now starting to decline. Below are two charts showing the number of converts brought into the Mormon Church and the number of full-time missionaries from 1961 to 1969. These figures were taken from the Church Section of the *Deseret News* and from the *Conference Reports*. Until the last few years the Mormon Church published the number of full-time missionaries on the field, but because of a problem involving the draft this information is no longer published. On November 2, 1970, however, a woman in the Missionary Department of the Church informed us that there are approximately 13,000 full-time missionaries in the field.

Convert Baptisms Into Mormon Church



Full-Time Mormon Missionaries



In 1959 the Mormon missionaries brought 23,026 people into the Church. In 1960 they brought in 48,586. This was an increase of over 100%. In 1961 they brought in 88,807 converts. In 1962 Henry D. Moyle, who was a member of the First Presidency, was reported as saying that he “feels 1962 will **record another 100 per cent increase** as did 1961” (*Deseret News*, Church Section, December 30, 1961, page 4).

In order to meet Mr. Moyle’s prediction, the missionaries would have needed to bring in over 170,000 converts in 1962. Instead they brought in 115,834. Still, this was a good increase. A minister reported that when he called the Church and asked for the number of converts for 1962, the man in the Missionary Department read the number and then stated that they would soon be bringing in **a million converts a year**. The next year after this prediction was made, the number of converts dropped to 105,210. In 1964 it was predicted that 100,000 converts would be brought into the Church:

Constant march of LDS missionaries to all parts of the world will maintain its high tempo in 1965 with a total of approximately 100,000 converts expected by the end of 1964. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, December 26, 1964)

Instead of bringing in a 100,000 converts, the figures dropped to 93,483. The next year (1965) the number of

converts again fell off. That year they brought in 82,455 converts. In spite of the fact that the Church had more missionaries in the field (12,535) in 1966, the number of converts continued to decline. The number dropped to 68,843. In 1967 the number of converts declined to 62,280. After the first nine months of 1968, the Church reported the following:

Cumulative progress reports of missionary work throughout the Church show that 66,657 converts have been baptized during the first nine months of 1968. Convert baptisms are expected to reach 100,000 by the end of the year. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, November 30, 1968)

These figures were certainly not based upon reality, for the figures released after the end of the year not only showed that the missionaries had failed to meet the mark of 100,000 converts, but that they were more than 2,000 short of the total reported for the first nine months! The final figure was 64,021. The report for 1969 shows that the missionaries made 70,010 converts. While this is almost 46,000 short of the total for 1962, it is still a large number of converts. The Mormon Church, therefore, still remains a serious threat to Christian churches throughout the world. This is especially true since the Mormon missionary system’s main attack is directed against these churches.



***Sandra and Jerald Tanner***

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