

5-1-1952

# A Critical Study of Mormon Doctrine

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A CRITICAL STUDY OF MORMON DOCTRINE

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Western Evangelical Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Bachelor of Divinity

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by  
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May 1952

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APPROVAL SHEET

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM

The importance of any movement may be determined, in part, by its claims. If these claims are true, they will demand careful attention of all concerned. The Mormon Church claims to represent "the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup> The foundation for this assertion is based on the Book of Mormon. This Book states that the Bible in its original form contained a true revelation from God.<sup>2</sup> This Church maintained that the Gospel was not retained in its pure and simple form, for following the apostles there arose an "abominable church" which deleted many plain and precious parts of the Bible. This assumption is recorded as follows:

And after they go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the foundation of a great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious.

. . . . .  
And after these plain and precious things were taken away it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles. . . .<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> William E. Berrett, The Restored Church (Utah: The Department of Education of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1937), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Smith, The Book of Mormon (Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1950), I Nephi 13:24.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I Nephi 13:26,29.



The above claim reveals the Mormon view of all other religious bodies representing Christianity, from the rise of the "abominable church" to that of our present day. Assuming this claim to be true, one is obliged to look upon the history of the Christian Church and its present day heritage as a misrepresentation of the truth as revealed in Christ. This, according to the Mormon belief, is a tragic picture and would have continued so if God had not chosen to restore these plain and precious truths through another revelation.<sup>4</sup> It is the possession and proclamation of these restored truths that provides a basis for the existence of the Mormon Church.

Firmly convinced that the above assertions are true, the Mormon Church has endured hardship and persecution to propagate its views. Displaying a conscientious, sacrificial spirit, missionaries have carried the message of the "restored church" throughout America and to many parts of the world.

#### I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The first phase. The doctrines of revelation and inspiration are important factors in establishing the claims of the Mormon Church. This investigator observed that the Mormon Church would have a sturdy foundation upon which to build its

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I Nephi 13:40.



unique claims if its views on revelation and inspiration were proven true. If, on the other hand, these views were shown to be invalid the entire movement would be in jeopardy. The first part of the problem, therefore, resolved around a careful objective study of the view of the Mormon Church on revelation and inspiration as compared with the view held by Conservative Protestantism.

The second phase. The second aspect of the problem involved a presentation of other doctrines (God, creation, fall, and salvation). A comparative study was necessary to determine the similarities and differences (in doctrine) between Mormonism and Conservative Protestantism.

## II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Comparison of doctrine. The purpose of this investigation has been to present a thorough study of major doctrines believed by the Mormon Church as compared with Conservative Protestantism. The purpose seemed valid for two reasons. First, because there was a paucity of material presenting such a comparative study. Second, because it was believed that such an approach would provide some of the clearest evidence regarding the validity of Mormon claims.

Clarity of thought. In recent years, the author has become particularly aware of the Mormon movement. It was



observed that many sincere persons were in a state of confusion when faced with the claims made by Mormon missionaries. Even those firmly grounded in the Bible found difficulty in answering some questions. A desire to aid these confused minds has been a primal stimulant in making the investigation.

### III. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS LITERATURE

Review of literature. A review of literature disclosed the fact that many helpful studies have been made. Some of these have been written by previous members of the Mormon Church. Their work demanded careful attention and provided valuable information. One such book was written by J. F. Gibbs, entitled Lights and Shadows of Mormonism. Mr. Gibbs was personally acquainted with Brigham Young. He participated in many activities for the Mormon Church including a mission to England. In approaching his subject, Mr. Gibbs provided keen insight into the inception and progress of the movement.

One of the clearest treatments on The Book of Mormon is The Golden Bible, written by Rev. M. T. Lamb (a Baptist minister). His thesis was: "The Book of Mormon lies at the foundation, is the corner stone of the Mormon Church. . . ."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> M. T. Lamb, The Golden Bible (New York: Ward and Drummond, 1887), p. 1.



He treats such subjects as literary style, miracles, inspiration, composition, and history. Rev. Lamb had a very fruitful ministry among the Mormons in Utah. His authoritative work was of utmost importance.

Another valuable work, though brief in its scope, was The Chaos of Cults, by Jan Karel Van Baalen. Particular stress was placed by Mr. Van Baalen upon the doctrine of polygamy and its development. Other doctrines of the Mormon Church were mentioned, but only briefly. The work is well organized and factually presented but is too brief to provide a fair analysis of the problem. It must of necessity be supplemented by other materials.

One of the best documented works has been written by James H. Snowden, entitled, The Truth About Mormonism. Mr. Snowden in his research had access to the most complete library of literature on Mormonism. His main purpose for writing was to present a fair treatment of Mormonism in the light of available evidence. He has many statements from men of authority in the Mormon Church, thus making the book invaluable.

Value of these books. The books thus far mentioned, and many others like them, have been valuable for two reasons: first, they have presented logical arguments some of which



have been well grounded; and second, they have been a rich source for reference materials which were welcomed in this study.

Apparent lack. It should be noted from the above references, there was the lack of adequate research in the area of doctrine. This observation, stimulated from the study of materials available, provided the firm conviction that this study was justified.

#### IV. LIMITATIONS OF THE PROBLEM

Delimiting the problem. Since every doctrine of the Mormon Church could not be considered within the limits of this study, the author has felt the necessity of being selective. The doctrines considered are as follows: Revelation and inspiration; Trinity, God, Christ and the Holy Spirit; Creation and the fall; and Salvation. The Mormon movement has several divisions but only the largest body, whose headquarters are at Salt Lake, was considered.

#### V. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Mormonism. Mormonism was the name given to that religious group who claimed the Book of Mormon to be a portion of God's inspired word. When this movement was organized in 1830, it was called the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day



Saints". This is the proper name for the organization and is preferred, by those representing this group, as over against the nickname Mormon. However, for the sake of brevity and because of familiarity, the name Mormon was used throughout this study.

Doctrine. The term doctrine came from the Greek word meaning "doctor" and is equivalent to the word "teacher".<sup>6</sup> It denotes both the act of teaching and that which is taught. In the Pastoral and general Epistles<sup>7</sup> of the New Testament, we see that the word doctrine came to mean a body of teachings which were generally accepted and served as a standard for orthodoxy.<sup>8</sup> It is from this scriptural teaching that the word doctrine derives its present meaning.

Arminian—Wesleyanism. The term Arminian is derived from James Arminius who revolted against hyper-Calvinism. He was born in the year 1560. His great contribution to the Christian Church was an emphasis of five specific points which are as follows: we are saved through believing in Christ; the atonement is unlimited; God provides prevenient grace;

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<sup>6</sup> James Orr, general editor, The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia. (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1947), II, 866.

<sup>7</sup> I Timothy 1:10; 6:3; II Timothy 1:13; 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1.

<sup>8</sup> Orr, op. cit., p. 867.



God's grace may be resisted; and one may forfeit his relation with God.<sup>9</sup>

A century and a half later John Wesley was born in England (1703). He accepted the teaching of James Arminius, and went on to make a valuable contribution in defining and developing the teaching of christian perfection as taught in the Bible. John Wesley believed that, ". . . We may be saved from all sin before death; that is from all sinful tempers and desires."<sup>10</sup>

Conservative Protestantism. This term has specific reference to that body within Christendom which maintains the Bible to be the only infallible guide to faith and practice. For clarity and convenience, this term was used throughout this study to designate the author's position.

## VI. ASSUMPTIONS

The Bible as the Word of God. The author believes the Holy Bible to be the inerrant Word of God. It is a supernatural revelation from God to man. The books of the Bible

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<sup>9</sup> Albert Henry Newman, A Manual of Church History (Illinois: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1948), II, 345.

<sup>10</sup> John Wesley, A Plain Account of Christian Perfection (Kentucky: Pentecostal Publishing Co., [n. d.]), p. 3.

were written by ". . . Holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."<sup>11</sup>

The Arminian-Wesleyan view. The author assumes the Arminian view, with John Wesley's teaching on christian perfection to be a true interpretation of the Bible.

## VII. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

Doctrines of the Mormon Church. After defining the problem, the author presented a study of the doctrines of revelation and inspiration, and four other major doctrines as held by the Mormon Church. (Fortunately this author had the privilege of visiting the headquarters of the Mormon Church in Salt Lake City, Utah, where access was given to the main library of this movement. The author was cordially received and valuable information was made available.)

Doctrines of Conservative Protestantism. The author then devoted his attention to major doctrines as held by Conservative Protestantism. These corresponded, as far as possible, to related doctrines of the Mormon Church.

Comparison and contrast. The presentation of Conservative Protestantism provided a basis for comparison and contrast.

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<sup>11</sup> II Peter 1:21



For clarity the contrast was made in chart form. Here was shown the actual similarity and differences between the doctrinal views held by the Mormon Church and Conservative Protestantism. The last chapter presented the conclusions of this study.



## CHAPTER II

### THE MORMON DOCTRINES OF REVELATION AND INSPIRATION

The doctrines of revelation and inspiration are significant in establishing the authority of the Mormon Church. Its very existence as a religious body is substantiated, in a large measure, by its definition and use of these doctrines. This chapter was devoted to a careful study of these terms with special emphasis upon revelation.

Materials and method of procedure. The materials used were divided into two main classifications: first, the four standard works<sup>1</sup> of the Mormon Church (The Holy Bible, The Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price); second, contributions from their outstanding leaders. These materials were used throughout the study of Mormon doctrine.

The method of procedure consisted of an inductive study of the four standard works. This was supplemented by a careful examination of the teachings presented by Joseph Smith and the first six presidents. Also, the contributions of Orson Pratt, an outstanding apologist, were considered. And from the leaders of today, a study was made of the lectures

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<sup>1</sup> The four standard works comprise the sacred scriptures of the Mormon Church.



from Sidney Sperry, present professor of language and literature at Brigham Young University.

Enumeration of points. The doctrines of revelation and inspiration were presented as follows: first, definition of terms; second, need for continuous revelation; third, how revelation is received and to whom it is given; fourth, a description of recorded revelation; fifth, the Mormon view of the Holy Bible; sixth, summary of revelation and authority of the Bible.

Definition. An adequate definition of the terms revelation and inspiration would necessarily include all the divisions of this chapter. A brief statement, however, regarding the essential nature of these doctrines would seem advisable as a preface. From the Book of Moses, found in the Pearl of Great Price, we have the following statement: ". . . for my works are without end, and also my words, for they never cease."<sup>2</sup> From this quotation we have the main principle of revelation, that of continuance. This is necessarily true because of its nature. Joseph F. Smith, sixth president, describes this nature.

What is revelation but the uncovering of new truths, by him who is the fountain of all truth? To say that

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<sup>2</sup> Joseph Smith, The Pearl of Great Price (Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951), Moses 1:4.



there is no need of new revelation, is equivalent to saying that we have no need of new truths--a ridiculous assertion.<sup>3</sup>

These new revealed truths provide guidance for the Mormon Church and for daily living of its respective members. We may epitomize the preceding observations by stating that God necessarily and continually gives revelation to his own in order to provide guidance in every realm of life. This avoids depending upon human reason.<sup>4</sup>

The term inspiration describes the means whereby we know the validity of divine impressions. The Doctrine and Covenants provided clear teaching at this point.

But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me [Christ] if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right. But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings. . . .<sup>5</sup>

The Mormon Church affirms that all revelations must come through properly inspired persons.

Need for revelation. An important aspect of the need for continuous revelation is based upon the teaching that

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<sup>3</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine Sermons and Writings (eighth edition; Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1949), p. 37.

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Fielding Smith, The Restoration of All Things (Utah: The Deseret News, 1944), p. 66.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph Smith, The Doctrine and Covenants (Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1950), 9:8,9.



continuous revelation is the foundation of the church! Without present day revelation, the church could not exist. Proof for this basic tenet is carefully labored by Sidney Sperry, present professor of Old Testament language and literature and director of religion at Brigham Young University. In commenting on Matthew 16:15-18, the following is cited:

The view consistently held by the Latter-day Saints has been that the 'rock'<sup>6</sup> is the principle of revelation. '. . . flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my father . . . and upon this rock (principle of revelation) I will build my church: . . .'<sup>7</sup>

Mr. Sperry continues by calling attention to the changing of Peter's name in John 1:42. Here he refers to the teaching of Joseph Smith.

When Joseph Smith was revising the Gospel of John by the spirit of revelation, he corrected this passage to read thus: 'And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, thou art Simon, the son of Jonah, thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation a seer,<sup>8</sup> or a stone.'<sup>9</sup>

By combining the teaching of these two scriptures (Matthew 16:15-18 and John 1:42), Mr. Sperry made the following conclusion in reference to a distinction between petros (masculine

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<sup>6</sup> Conservative Protestantism believes the rock to be Christ.

<sup>7</sup> Sidney B. Sperry, Themes of the Restored Church (Utah: Bookcraft Publishing Co., 1950), p. 135.

<sup>8</sup> Sidney Sperry stated that the translation of Cephas to mean "seer" is not given in our modern Aramaic dictionaries, but was unfortunately lost during early Christian times.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 136.



gender translated Peter) and petra (feminine gender translated rock):

In view of the fact that our Lord was so pleased with the revelatory or seeric powers of Peter, what could be more reasonable than to believe that by petra [feminine], [Italics and brackets by Sperry] he had reference to the fundamental principle of seership or revelation? That is the great mother rock or principle upon which the Church should be built. The reason why our Protestant and Catholic friends alike refuse to see the great strength of our position is that in their presuppositions they rule out living oracles of God.<sup>10</sup>

Accepting the position that the church is built upon the rock of revelation, provides one of the strongest arguments for the need of continuous revelation.

The next step in the development of the need for present day revelation is that without revelation salvation is not obtainable. Joseph Smith declared the following: "Salvation cannot come without revelation [continuous]; it is in vain for anyone to minister without it. . . ."<sup>11</sup> And again,

The plea of many in this day is, that we have no right to receive revelations; but if we do not get revelations, we do not have the oracles of God; and if they have not the oracles of God, they are not the people of God.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 143.

<sup>11</sup> Joseph Fielding Smith, compiler, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (Utah: The Deseret News Press, 1938), p. 160.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 272.



Brigham Young, who followed Joseph Smith and assumed the first presidency, wrote the following:

If we had all the revelation given since the days of Adam and were without the spirit of revelation [continuous] to be and abide in the midst of the people, it would be impossible for us to be saved in the celestial kingdom of God.<sup>13</sup>

Another emphatic statement on this subject was presented by president Wilford Woodruff.

I would to God that the inhabitants of the earth would get rid of the idea that revelation ceased when Christ was put to death. It is a false doctrine. Revelation [continuous] belongs to the salvation of the children of men.<sup>14</sup>

Fortunately, God has not left man to grope in darkness but has provided revelation through the Mormon Church. These revelations are binding as holy scripture. The one who rejects these revelations cannot inherit eternal life, but shall be damned forever. This damnation was taught by Joseph Smith.

What will become of the world, or the various professors of religion who do not believe in revelation and the oracles of God as continued [italics not in original] to His Church in all ages of the world, when He has a people on earth? I tell you, in the name of Jesus Christ, they will be damned; and when you get into the eternal

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<sup>13</sup> John A. Widtsoe, selected and arranged, Discourses of Brigham Young (Utah: The Deseret News Press, 1925), p. 197, citing Journal of Discourses 12:259-260.

<sup>14</sup> Homer G. Durham, arranged and edited by, The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff (Utah: The Bookcraft Co., 1946), p. 49.



world, you will find it will be so, they cannot escape the damnation of hell.<sup>15</sup>

How revelation is received. Having surveyed the problem of the need for revelation, the author turned to a consideration of how revelation is received. The first endeavor was to establish the means whereby revelation, binding upon the church, is communicated. A study of the Melchizedek priesthood, as taught by the Mormon Church, provides an understanding of this problem.

There are two Priesthoods spoken of in the Scriptures, viz., the Melchizedek and the Aaronic or Levitical. Although there are two Priesthoods, yet the Melchizedek Priesthood comprehends the Aaronic or Levitical Priesthood, and is the grand head, and holds the highest authority which pertains to the Priesthood, and the keys of the Kingdom of God in all ages of the world to the latest posterity on the earth; and is the channel through which all knowledge, doctrine, the plan of salvation and every important matter is revealed from heaven.

Its institution was prior to 'the foundation of this earth, . . . ' and is the highest and holiest Priesthood, and is after the order of the Son of God, and all other Priesthoods are only parts, ramifications, powers and blessings belonging to the same, and are held, controlled, and directed by it. It is the channel through which the Almighty commenced revealing His glory at the beginning of the creation of this earth, and through which He has continued to reveal Himself to the children of men to the present time, and through which He will make known His purposes to the end of time.<sup>16</sup>

The Melchizedek priesthood, which is eternal, was bestowed by Christ upon Adam. A brief historical sketch of

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<sup>15</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, op. cit., p. 272.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 166, 167.



this priesthood from Adam to Moses was provided by president Wilford Woodruff.

Father Adam was called of God and ordained to the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood--ordained to the highest office and gift of God to man on the earth. Adam bestowed that blessing upon seven of his sons--Seth, Enos, Jared, Canaan, Mahalaleel, Enoch, and Methuselah. They were all ordained high priests by their father Adam, and possessed the privilege and the right to understand the gospel of Jesus Christ and to give it to the human family, so that they might qualify and prepare themselves for eternal life. In tracing the history of the dealing of God with men from that day to this, we find that the Lord has in various dispensations and times given unto the sons of men that blessing. Israel had it in the beginning, from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob down, and until Moses, who traveled with the children of Israel forty years in the wilderness. They had the gifts and graces of that Priesthood bestowed upon them, and they had the privilege of magnifying their callings and preparing themselves for eternal life. But Israel would not accept the Melchizedek Priesthood, and therefore it was taken from them, and the lesser [Aaronic] priesthood was conferred upon them while they traveled in the wilderness.<sup>17</sup>

For the purpose of this study, it was not necessary to trace the history of the Melchizedek priesthood from Moses to Christ. It is important, however, to recognize the way that this priesthood (which includes the keys of authority for promoting the kingdom of God) descended from Christ to Joseph Smith.

Never is there but one appointed at a time to hold the keys of the kingdom of God pertaining to the earth. While Christ remained on the earth he held them; but when he departed, he committed them to Peter, he being the

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<sup>17</sup> The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star 58:305-306, April 5, 1896, cited by Durham, op. cit., pp. 64, 65.



president or chief of the apostles; and it was his right to direct and to receive revelation for the Church and to give counsel to all the brethren. After Satan and wicked men had prevailed against the Church, crucified the Savior and killed the apostles, the keys of the kingdom were taken from the earth. John the Revelator describes it most clearly. And from that time until Joseph Smith was called by the voice of the Almighty, and ordained to hold those keys, no man held them upon the earth that we know of.<sup>18</sup>

Whenever God has desired to make his will known "to the children of men, or has any instructions to impart to his church, he will make such communication through the legally appointed channel of the priesthood; he will never go outside of it. . . ."<sup>19</sup>

To conclude this treatment of the Melchizedek priesthood, careful attention should be given to the office and function of the president<sup>20</sup> who is at the head of the Melchizedek priesthood on earth, and is the one to whom the keys of the kingdom are given. The Mormon Church clearly teaches that revelation binding upon the church must come through the president.

. . . The Presidents or Presidency are over the Church; and revelations of the mind and will of God to the Church,

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<sup>18</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine Sermons and Writings, op. cit., p. 43.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>20</sup> "Unto whom I have given the keys of the kingdom, which belong always unto the Presidency of the High Priesthood;" (The Doctrine and Covenants, 81:2).



are to come through the Presidency. This is the order of heaven, . . .<sup>21</sup>

From the above study, the following may be observed as to the method whereby revelations are received:

1. The Melchizedek priesthood has existed from before the foundations of the world.
2. Without the function of this priesthood there cannot be established a true church of God.
3. God is pleased to communicate his will (revelation) for the church through this divinely appointed channel.
4. This priesthood and keys of authority were given to Joseph Smith, to be administered during this last dispensation. (The keys had been withdrawn from the earth following the death of the Apostles).

Through Joseph Smith and the succeeding presidents of the Mormon Church, God revealed his will for man. This in essence is the means whereby revelation is received for the church.

Though revelation is exclusively provided through the Melchizedek priesthood (binding upon all the church), it is also recognized that individual members may receive personal revelation to properly discharge duties in the church and guide their personal life.

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<sup>21</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, op. cit., p. 111.



. . . The gift of revelation, does not belong to one man solely; it is not a gift that pertains to the Presidency of the Church and the Twelve apostles alone. It is not confined to the presiding authorities of the Church; and it is the right and privilege of every man, every woman, and every child who has reached the years of accountability, to enjoy the spirit of revelation, and to be possessed of the spirit of inspiration in the discharge of their duties as members of the Church. It is the privilege of every individual member of the Church to have revelation for his own guidance, for the direction of his life and conduct;. . .<sup>22</sup>

There are three prerequisites to receiving personal revelation.

First, one must be born of the Spirit. (This comes only through the Mormon Church.) Second, one's life must be pleasing to God.

Yea, blessed are they whose feet stand upon the land of Zion, who have obeyed my gospel; for they shall receive for their reward the good things of the earth, and it shall bring forth in its strength. And they shall also be crowned with blessings from above, yea, and with commandments not a few, and with revelations in their time--they that are faithful and diligent before me.<sup>23</sup>

Third, one must ask.

If thou shalt ask, thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peacable things--that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth eternal life.<sup>24</sup>

If the above qualifications are met, a member of the Mormon Church may receive revelations but they are not necessarily binding upon the lives of others.

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<sup>22</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine Sermons and Writings, op. cit., p. 34.

<sup>23</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 59:3,4.

<sup>24</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 42:61.



A word of caution has been sounded to the effect that there is a danger in misusing the privilege of receiving revelation. Some of the leaders of the Mormon Church have spoken strongly against its abuse. Joseph Fielding Smith (sixth president) taught that the church should not seek new revelations until they had faithfully carried out present commandments.<sup>25</sup> To do so would be to bring greater condemnation. Another caution is mentioned in the Doctrine and Covenants. This is in the nature of a warning to those who pride themselves in being a revelator.

For although a man may have many revelations, and have power to do many mighty works, yet if he boasts in his own strength, and sets at naught the counsels of God, and follows after the dictates of his own will and carnal desires, he must fall and incur the vengeance of a just God upon him.<sup>26</sup>

Description of added revelations. A study of revelation, as held by the Mormon Church, would not be complete without some consideration of added revelation. By added revelation the author means those revelations which are extra-Biblical. Unfortunately, it will be impossible to provide an extensive survey of these writings in this study. It seemed profitable, however, to touch briefly upon the history of each.

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<sup>25</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine Sermons and Writings, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>26</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 3:4.



The Book of Mormon is claimed to be a divinely inspired document, "made by the prophets of the ancient peoples who inhabited the American continent for centuries before and after the time of Christ."<sup>27</sup> These records were translated into our modern language by Joseph Smith. During the night of September 21-22, 1823, Joseph Smith received a visitation from an angel. Subsequent visitations followed wherein he was informed of the whereabouts of some golden plates. Later under divine guidance Joseph was led to the hill Cumorah in New York where the golden plates were uncovered. Through special help of the Urim and Thummin,<sup>28</sup> he was able to make the translation. The Book of Mormon was first published in 1830. The Book of Mormon is believed to have several advantages when compared with the Bible. First, it was infallibly translated. Second, it has many important predictions not mentioned in the Bible. Third, many points of doctrine are more clearly stated. Fourth, it has restored "many parts, plain and precious" which were taken from the Bible when it was translated.<sup>29</sup> These advantages, it is claimed, do not

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<sup>27</sup> James E. Talmage, Articles of Faith (Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1949), p. 255.

<sup>28</sup> The Urim and Thummin were deposited with the plates. When looking into these stones the translation would miraculously appear and when the translation was accurately copied the translation would disappear.

<sup>29</sup> M. T. Lamb, The Golden Bible (New York: Ward and Drummond, 1887), pp. 5,6.



mean that The Book of Mormon is intended to supplant the Bible. Talmage, in his Articles of Faith teaches that the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints accepts the Holy Bible as the foremost of her standard works."<sup>30</sup>

The Pearl of Great Price is one of the three books of revelation issued by Joseph Smith. It is believed (by the Mormons) to be an inspired work of equal authority with all other revelations. In 1835, Joseph Smith first came into contact with the source of the Pearl of Great Price. At that time, he received from Mr. Michael H. Chandler two or three pieces of papyri and two Egyptian mummies. "No men then could read the Egyptian hieroglyphics with accuracy. The Rosetta stone had not been deciphered, and Egyptology was practically a closed book."<sup>31</sup> With the aid of the Urim and Thummin, Joseph translated these hieroglyphics and published his translation under the title the Pearl of Great Price.

The book is divided into two main portions, the Book of Moses and the Book of Abraham. The Book of Moses deals primarily with creation and is very similar to Genesis 1 to 3 with some changes and additions. The Book of Abraham was written by Abraham while in Egypt and treats of the Holy

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<sup>30</sup> Talmage, op. cit., p. 236.

<sup>31</sup> Stuart Martin, The Mystery of Mormonism (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., [n. d.]), p. 273.



Priesthood and the nature of God. The contents of these two books will be a rich source of reference in the further doctrinal studies.

The Doctrine and Covenants consists of continuous revelations given to Joseph Smith up to the time of his death. These revelations treat numerous subjects. Some deal with very practical aspects of church activity while others are doctrinal in content. The unique doctrines of celestial marriage and baptism for the dead are developed in this writing. The history of the writing of this book is briefly explained as follows:

Many revelations followed [writing of Book of Mormon], in preparation for re-establishing of the Church of Jesus Christ on earth, . . . As early as the summer of 1830, the Prophet, acting under Divine commandment, was engaged in copying and arranging the revelations received up to that time. . . . On November 1, 1831 . . . definite action was taken, and the compilation was called the Book of Commandments.<sup>32</sup>

Later the name was changed to Doctrine and Covenants. All the sections of this book are revelations received by Joseph Smith except the last section which was given to Brigham Young.

The place of the Bible. Having surveyed the extra-Biblical revelations of the Mormon Church, the question arises

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<sup>32</sup> Doctrine and Covenants (in Explanatory Introduction) p. III.



as to the value of the Bible. A clear discussion of this question is valuable in helping to establish the need for continuous revelation.

As previously quoted, the Articles of Faith by Talmage, indicates that the Bible assumes the foremost place among the four standard works of the Mormon Church. It is further taught, that "in respect and sanctity with which the Latter-day Saints regard the Bible they are of like profession with Christian denominations in general."<sup>33</sup> We read further that the extra-Biblical works "are in harmony with the Bible, and serve to support and emphasize its facts and doctrines."<sup>34</sup> The church, however, recognizes one limitation which is stated in the eighth article of faith. "We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly."<sup>35</sup> This limitation is elucidated somewhat by the following statement:

The New Testament must be accepted for what it claims to be; and though, perhaps, many precious parts have been suppressed or lost, while some corruptions of the text may have crept in, and errors have been inadvertently introduced through the incapacity of translators, the volume as a whole must be admitted as authentic and credible.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Talmage, op. cit., p. 236.

<sup>34</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>35</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>36</sup> Talmage, op. cit., p. 248.



Mr. Talmage, in the above statement, makes reference to precious parts of the Bible being suppressed or lost. His authority for this statement is found in The Book of Mormon. Because of the signal importance of this reference, the author has quoted it at some length.

And the angel of the Lord said unto me: Thou hast beheld that the book [Holy Bible] proceeded forth from the mouth of the Jew; and when it proceeded forth . . . it contained the plainness of the gospel of the Lord, . . . And after they go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, . . . thou seest the foundation of a great and abominable church, . . . behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away. And all this have they done that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord, that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men. . . . Because of these things which are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb, an exceeding great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them. . . . Neither will the Lord God suffer that the Gentiles shall forever remain in that awful state of blindness, which thou beholdest they are in, because of the plain and most precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that abominable church.<sup>37</sup>

The Book of Mormon continues to teach that these plain and precious truths would be restored and that this restoration is accomplished in The Book of Mormon.

And the angel spoke unto me, saying: These last records, [Book of Mormon] which thou hast seen among the Gentiles, shall establish the truth of the first, which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken

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<sup>37</sup> Joseph Smith, The Book of Mormon (Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1948), I Nephi 13:24, 26, 27, 29, 32.



away from them; and 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.<sup>38</sup>

From the above quotation, the following facts about the Bible are observed:

1. When the teachings of Jesus and the apostles went forth they were pure and undefiled.
2. Following the death of the Apostles, an abomination set in and the words which were pure began a downward trend of corruption.
3. There was a literal taking away of precious truths. These truths were in essence basic doctrines. The reference in I Nephi 13:40 infers that the steps of salvation were so corrupted that man could not find God.

No wonder the angel who delivered this sad message to Nephi exclaimed that humanity was in an "awful state of blindness". But this was not all. As previously indicated, in this chapter, Christ removed the keys of the kingdom when the Apostles died. Therefore, the compilers of the Bible could not have been divinely guided in the least, for divine guidance comes only when the true priesthood is functioning or when an individual or group sincerely repents and seeks God's help. The inference one derives from The Book of Mormon

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., I Nephi 13:40.



is that the pollutions were deliberate, and actually conceived and directed by Satan. Another important fact is that the Bible did not point a single soul to Christ, which issued in saving faith, from the days of the apostles to the days of Joseph Smith. This claim is substantiated in the following quotation:

Respecting the Melchizedek Priesthood, the sectarian world never professed to have it, consequently they never could save anyone and would all be damned together. . . .<sup>39</sup>

The author sincerely believes that the above observations are not in the least exaggerated. To deny these facts would be to deny The Book of Mormon and the teaching of leaders in the Mormon Church. Granting these observations to be true, it appears that Talmage has not properly represented the true Mormon position on the Bible. Therefore, recognition is made of another outstanding writer who has written from another extreme. Orson Pratt, an outstanding apologist, represents the only true logical position the Mormon Church may assume regarding the Bible. It is granted that many laymen and some leaders in the Mormon Church would not accept, at first, Orson Pratt's conclusions, but they will be logically forced to his position when a fair inductive analysis is made. The author has taken the liberty to quote at length from the

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<sup>39</sup> William Earl La Rue and Alfred Williams Anthony, The Foundations of Mormonism (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1919), p. 45.



writings of Orson Pratt because of their great importance on this vital subject. Regarding the cannonizing of the Bible, Orson Pratt states:

How do the Protestants prove the truth of the Bible? What evidence have they that the book of Matthew was inspired of God, or any other of the books of the New Testament? The only evidence they have is tradition. They have received into their canon such books only as tradition accredits to be genuine. . . . Here then we clearly perceive that the first foundation stone of the Protestant rule of faith is tradition.<sup>40</sup>

This fallible guide (Bible) provided the source for confusion and strife in protestantism.

All things combined with the unavoidable errors of an uninspired translation, have rendered the English Bible extremely uncertain and ambiguous. This uncertainty and ambiguity has been the principle cause of all the divisions of modern Christendom.<sup>41</sup>

In answering the question, is the Bible an adequate guide, Orson Pratt advances the following:

What shall we say then, concerning the Bible's being a sufficient guide? Can we rely upon it in its present known corrupted state, as being a faithful record of God's word? We all know that but a few of the inspired writings have descended to our times, which few quote the names of some twenty other books which are lost, and it is quite certain that there were many other inspired books that even the names have not reached us. What few have come down to our day, have been mutilated, changed and corrupted, in such a shameful manner that no two manuscripts agree. Verses and even whole chapters have been added by unknown persons; and even we do not know

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<sup>40</sup> Orson Pratt, "The Bible and Tradition, Without Further Revelation, An Insufficient Guide", Divine Authority of the Book of Mormon, Vol. 16, (December 1, 1850), p. 44.

<sup>41</sup> Lamb, op. cit., p. 196.



the author of some whole books; and we are not certain that all those which we do know, were written by inspiration. Add all this imperfection to the uncertainty of the translation, and who, in his right mind, could, for one moment, suppose the Bible in its present form to be a perfect guide? Who knows that even one verse of the whole Bible has escaped pollution, so as to convey the same sense now that it did in the original? Who knows how many important doctrines and ordinances necessary to salvation may be buried in oblivion in some of the lost books? Who knows that even the ordinances and doctrines that seem to be set forth in the present English Bible, are anything like the original? . . . There can be no certainty as to the contents of the inspired writings until God shall inspire one to re-write all those books over again, as he did Esdras in ancient times. There is no possible means of arriving at certainty in any other way. No reflecting man can deny the necessity of such a new revelation.<sup>42</sup>

It may be seen from the above quotations, that the conclusions of Orson Pratt are consistently logical with the inductions made from The Book of Mormon. The Bible, therefore, is admittedly an inadequate guide for the Christian life.

Summary. A brief summary of the Mormon position on revelation and the authority of the Bible will be helpful at this point.

1. Revelation is continuous.
2. The church cannot exist without continuous revelation.
3. Continuous revelation is only communicated through the Mormon Church.

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<sup>42</sup> Pratt, op. cit., p. 47.



4. The Book of Mormon, Pearl of Great Price, and Doctrine and Covenants, are inspired writings.
5. The above named writings are superior to the Bible.
6. The only proof we have of the trustworthiness of the Bible is tradition.
7. The Bible has been the source of strife and confusion.
8. The Bible is an inadequate guide to faith and practice.



## CHAPTER III

### THE MORMON DOCTRINE OF GOD

To properly understand any religious system, one must have a clear concept of its doctrine of God. It is upon this doctrine that the entire system must rest. This chapter is devoted to a study of God and was divided into three parts; namely, the doctrines of God the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

#### I. THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

The doctrine of God the Father was examined as follows: first, the relation of God to spirit and matter; second, God has parts and body; third, plurality of Gods in the Trinity; fourth, the progression of God; fifth, the attributes of God; and sixth, the Adam-God belief.

Spirit and matter. The Mormon Church has adopted a philosophy of spirit and matter which cannot be poured into the traditional molds of either monism or dualism. Basically, this church teaches that spirit and matter are co-eternal, differing only in degree of refinement. In the Doctrine and Covenants we read, "There is no such thing as immaterial matter. All spirit is matter, but is more fine and pure, and can only be discerned by purer eyes; We cannot see it; but



when our bodies are purified we shall see that it is all matter."<sup>1</sup>

Accepting the position that spirit is refined matter, the Mormon Church concludes that the only essential difference between God and man is a difference of degree. There is no difference in kind. Nels L. Nelson in his book entitled, Scientific Aspects of Mormonism focuses our attention on this belief by stating that man "must feel himself categorically a child of God; differing, indeed, in degree but not in kind."<sup>2</sup> Mormonism has not only advocated that all is matter, but speaks strongly against the dualistic concept of Conservative Protestantism. Brigham Young, first president, in answering the question is there immaterial substance declared,

'Immaterial substance.' It is like the center of a being everywhere and his circumference nowhere, or like being seated on the top of a topless throne. These are self-confounding expressions, and there is no meaning to any of them.<sup>3</sup>

Denouncing all immaterialism, the problem of a first cause is called into question. If matter is co-eternal with God (God being matter), can there be a first cause, and if so, may we know this cause? Unfortunately, this author found

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Smith, The Doctrine and Covenants (Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1950), 131:7,8.

<sup>2</sup> Nels L. Nelson, Scientific Aspects of Mormonism (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> John A. Widtsoe, selected and arranged, The Discourses of Brigham Young (Utah: The Deseret News Press, 1925), p. 75, citing Journal of Discourses, 16:31.



very little discussion on this subject by Mormon writers. This is understandable, because a first cause is naturally excluded in the system. Brigham Young, who made brief mention of a first cause gives the following ironical comment:

It would be as easy for a gnat to trace the history of man back to his origin as for man to fathom the first cause of all things, lift the veil of eternity, and reveal the mysteries that have been sought after by philosophers from the beginning.<sup>4</sup>

God has parts and body. The belief that God has parts and body is based upon the teaching that spirit is matter. The following Mormon Scriptures cite this position: ". . . And the veil was taken from off the eyes of the brother of Jared, and he saw the finger of the Lord; and it was as the finger of a man, like unto flesh and blood; . . ."<sup>5</sup> "The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; . . ."<sup>6</sup> Further proof of this view is sought in the Old Testament, where it speaks of God sitting on his throne, his arm outstretched, etc. These references are believed to be to a God who has parts and body.

Joseph Smith taught that the belief of God having a body was polluted by the sectarian world. In John 14:23, 60

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph Smith, The Book of Mormon (Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1948), Ether 3:6,16.

<sup>6</sup> Doctrine and Covenants, 130:22.



where it speaks of the Father and Son coming to make their abode with the Christian, Joseph Smith received a revelation correcting the sectarian interpretation of this being a personal spiritual indwelling.

The appearing of the Father and the Son, in that verse, [John 14:23] is a personal appearance; and the idea that the Father and the Son dwell in a man's heart is an old sectarian notion, and is false.<sup>7</sup>

Also, Joseph Smith received a revelation upon I John 4:12. In the King James version this verse reads: "No man hath seen God at any time. . . ." Joseph Smith translated this verse as follows: "No man hath seen God at any time, except them who believe."<sup>8</sup>

Brigham Young gave the following argument as to why God must have parts and body:

. . . We cannot believe for a moment that God is destitute of body, parts, passions, or attributes. Attributes can be made manifest only through an organized personage. All attributes are couched in and are the results of organized existence.<sup>9</sup>

Another argument is presented by Mr. Young when he stated that "it must be that God knows something about temporal things, and has had a body . . . Were it not so, he would not know

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 130:3.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph F. Smith, The Restoration of All Things (Utah: The Deseret News, 1944), p. 59.

<sup>9</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 35, citing Journal of Discourses, 10:192.



how to judge men righteously, according to the temptations and sin they have had to contend with."<sup>10</sup>

Plurality of Gods in the Trinity. That there are many Gods, is a major tenet of the Mormon Church. Joseph Smith dogmatically affirmed this position.

I will preach on the plurality of Gods. . . . I wish to declare I have always and in all congregations when I have preached on the subject of the Deity, it has always been the plurality of Gods. It has been preached by the Elders for fifteen years.<sup>11</sup>

The Trinitarian view as held by Conservative Protestantism is rejected by the Mormon Church. The Doctrine and Covenants teaches three separate Gods in the trinity. "The Father has a body of flesh and bones . . . the Son also; . . . the Holy Spirit . . . is a personage of Spirit."<sup>12</sup> Joseph Smith commented on the relation of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit by saying:

I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and that the Holy Ghost was a distinct personage and a Spirit: and these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods.<sup>13</sup>

The Mormon Church teaches that the doctrine of the trinity, as held by Conservative Protestantism, is an absurdity.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 37, 4:271.

<sup>11</sup> Joseph F. Smith, compiler, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (fifth edition; Utah: The Deseret News Press, 1938), p. 370.

<sup>12</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 130:22.

<sup>13</sup> Joseph F. Smith, loc. cit.



The immaterialist teaches that the Godhead consists of three persons of one substance, and that each of these persons can be everywhere present. Now in order to be everywhere present, each of these persons must be infinitely extended, or else each must be susceptible of occupying two or more places at the same time . . . . It is utterly impossible for a person to be in two or more places at the same time, hence immaterialism [Trinity] is totally absurd and unphilosophical.<sup>14</sup>

Though there are three separate Gods, there is a unity in attributes, power, and purpose.

The number of Gods is not limited to the trinity. The Mormon Church teaches that there are innumerable Gods outside the trinity. A discussion of these Gods is undertaken in the following division.

God becoming, or the perfect-imperfect God. One key word in the Mormon doctrine of God is progression. All Gods are progressing, or advancing to higher stages of glory. To think of progression, one must have a starting point. From what point, did these Gods begin to progress? Theoretically, one cannot speak of a beginning point in the Mormon system, but there is very clear teaching that all Gods were once man. Brigham Young spoke extensively on this subject. In addressing a congregation, he said, "And you have got to learn how to be

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<sup>14</sup> Orson Pratt, "Absurdities of Immaterialism," Pamphlet (Liverpool: R. James, Printer, [n. d.]), p. 9.



Gods yourselves, the same as all Gods have done before you."<sup>15</sup>  
 The teaching that God was once man is affirmed by the positive statement of Joseph Smith.

God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret. If the veil were rent today, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by his power, was to make himself visible, -- I say, if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form--like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man; . . . These are incomprehensible ideas to some, but they are simple. It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the character of God, and to know that we may converse with him as one man converses with another, and that he was once a man like us; yea, that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ himself did; . . .<sup>16</sup>

Evidence from the Holy Bible (John 5:19) was presented by Joseph Smith as proof that God was once man.

The Scriptures inform us that Jesus said, As the Father hath power in Himself, even so hath the Son power--to do what? Why, what the Father did. The answer is obvious--in a manner to lay down His body and take it up again. Jesus, what are you going to do? To lay down my life as my Father did, and take it up again. Do you believe it? If you do not believe it, you do not believe the Bible. The Scriptures say it, and I defy all the learning and wisdom and all the combined powers of earth and hell together to refute it.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> James H. Snowden, The Truth About Mormonism (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1926), p. 128, citing Journal of Discourses, 6:4.

<sup>16</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, op. cit., pp. 345, 346.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 346.



If Jesus has done what the Father did, then one must conclude that the Father was once man as Christ was man. The Mormon Church believes the glorious hope of man today is that he will (if faithful) become a God; progress, and be exalted as all Gods have done before him. This progression will enable man someday to be called supreme and Almighty.

If any of his children become heirs to all things, they in their turn may say, by - and by, that they know all things, and they will be called Supreme, Almighty, King of Kings, Lord of lords. All this and more that cannot enter into our hearts to conceive is promised to the faithful, and are but so many stages in that ceaseless progression of eternal lives.<sup>18</sup>

Having established the fact that Mormonism teaches eternal progression of the Gods, we need to reconcile another teaching that there is one supreme God above all other Gods. Just how this God assumed his position of being above all other Gods is not clearly taught. It is assumed without any attempt of proof. This enables the Mormon Church to use the singular in reference to God. An illustration of this usage is indicated in the following quotation: ". . . [God] has received his crown and exaltation and holds the keys and the power of this Kingdom; he [singular] sways his scepter, and does his [singular] will among the children of men. . . ."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 30,31, citing Journal of Discourses 10:5.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 34, 11:249.



This study further revealed, that coupled with the teaching that God is eternally progressing is the view that God is unchangeable. In the Doctrine and Covenants we read that God is "infinite and eternal, from everlasting to everlasting the same unchangeable God, the framer of heaven and earth, and all things which are in them."<sup>20</sup> God is "unchangeable in the sense that he always acts according to law."<sup>21</sup> Again we read that "each of these Gods, including Jesus Christ and His Father, . . . is subject to the laws which govern, of necessity, even the most refined order of physical existence."<sup>22</sup> These laws are unchanging through all eternity. God will always relate himself to these laws and in that sense is the same yesterday, today and forever. These laws not only include the laws of the universe but also include the eternal Priesthood and plan of salvation. The relation of a plan of salvation was carefully studied in the chapter on salvation.

The attributes of God. The attributes of God, according to the Mormon belief, are necessarily relative. When exclusive

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<sup>20</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 20:17.

<sup>21</sup> Sidney B. Sperry, Themes of the Restored Gospel (Utah: Bookcraft Publishing Co., 1950), p. 34.

<sup>22</sup> Jan Karel Van Baalen, The Chaos of Cults (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1946), p. 134, citing Key to the Science of Theology from Pratt, p. 42.



terms are used such as "all wisdom" it must be qualified by saying that for that particular moment God possesses all wisdom needed to function as God in the capacity necessary for the moment. With this mental reservation one may approach the study of the attributes of God.

The following attributes are attributed to God:

1. He is infinite and eternal. "Which Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God, [in purpose] infinite, and eternal, without end. . . ."23

2. He is omnipresent. "He is present with all his creations through his influence, through his government, spirit and power. . . ."24

3. He has all power and all wisdom. ". . . boasting in my God; for he has all power, and all wisdom, and all understanding. . . ."25

4. He is merciful. ". . . Who can say too much of his great power, and his mercy, . . ."26

This list does not exhaust the attributes of God as taught by the Mormon Church. It does show, however, that the

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23 Doctrine and Covenants 20:28.

24 Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 36, citing Journal of Discourses, 10:319.

25 The Book of Mormon, Alma 26:35.

26 Ibid., Alma 26:16.



phraseology is similar and often identical to that used by Conservative Protestantism.

The Adam-God theory. In the conclusion of this study, on the doctrine of God, it seemed advisable to treat the Adam-God theory. This theory came to fruition in the teachings of Brigham Young. In essence, it teaches that Adam and Eve came to this earth from the celestial world and became rulers over the destinies of this earth. The statement often quoted (made by Brigham Young) is that Adam ". . . is Michael, the Archangel, 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. . . ."27 The Doctrine and Covenants provide the basis for the names given to Adam. ". . . And the voice of Michael, the archangel; the voice of Gabriel, and of Raphael, and of divers angels, from Michael or Adam. . . ."28 ". . . Adam . . . the Ancient of Days. . . ."29 It is evident that Adam has received a high place in relation to this earth as the great progenitor of the human race. It is obvious that Brigham Young accepted an extreme position

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27 Josiah F. Gibbs, Lights and Shadows of Mormonism (Utah: Salt Lake Tribune Publishing Co., 1909), p. 37, citing Journal of Discourses, Vol. I, page 50, April 9th, 1852.

28 Doctrine and Covenants 128:21.

29 Ibid., Section 116.



when he stated that Adam was "the only God with whom we have to do." A more detailed study of Adam, his place and honor, was considered in the chapter on salvation.

## II. THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

Method of Procedure. The doctrine of Christ was divided into His person and work. The work of Christ relating to redemption was considered in the chapter on salvation. The present chapter is devoted to his person and is divided as follows: first, Christ the first-born of God; second, the nature of Christ's person; third, His birth; fourth, polygamous marriages.

Christ the first-born of God. The Mormon Church believes Christ to be the first-born of God. He was the first of the progeny of God in the spirit world. "Among the spirit children of Elohim, the first-born was and is Jehovah, or Jesus Christ, to whom all others are juniors."<sup>30</sup> Christ is therefore not co-eternal with the Father in the sense applied to this term by Conservative Protestantism. As an intelligent spirit-being, he owed all his attributes and character to the factor

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<sup>30</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine Sermons and Writings (eighth edition; Utah: Deseret Book Co., 1949), p. 70, citing Improvement Era, Vol. 19, p. 940.



of inheritance. Joseph Fielding Smith stated that, "Christ inherited his intelligence from his Father."<sup>31</sup>

The nature of Christ's person. Mormonism maintains that Christ has but one nature which is material.

'Jesus Christ and his Father are two persons. Each of them has an organized, individual tabernacle, embodied in material form, and composed of material substance, in the likeness of man, and possessing every organ, limb and physical part that man possesses.'<sup>32</sup>

The reference by Parley Pratt, in the preceding quotation, to an "individual tabernacle, embodied in material form" refers to a pre-existent tabernacle of highly refined matter. It is evident that the only organic difference between Christ and the rest of humanity is first, his privilege of being the first-born; and second, his privilege of being favored with a special birth. These differences are indicated by Brigham Young.

When the time came that his First-born, the Savior, should come into the world and take a tabernacle, the Father came himself and favored that Spirit with a tabernacle instead of letting any other man do it. The Savior was begotten by the Father and his Spirit, by the same being who is the father of our spirits, and that is all the organic difference between Jesus Christ and you and me.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>32</sup> Snowden, op. cit., p. 129, citing Key to Science and Theology by Parley Pratt, pp. 39,40.

<sup>33</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 77, citing Journal of Discourses, 4:218.



The birth of Christ. Special attention should be given to the Mormon teaching concerning the nature of Christ's birth. In a very real sense it was different from all other births. This unique birth was realized through a union between Adam and Mary.

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 was the Father? He was the first of the human family. . . . 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!<sup>34</sup>

From the above quotation Christ was not conceived by the Holy Ghost. His birth was a ". . . wonderous yet natural birth, . . ."<sup>35</sup> The fact that it was a natural birth is emphasized by Orson Pratt in the following statement:

'The fleshy 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.'<sup>36</sup>

Mormonism maintains that though Christ had a natural birth, he manifested all the attributes possessed by his Father. These were not displayed in maturity, however, until he

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<sup>34</sup> Van Baalen, op. cit., p. 138, citing Brigham Young from Journal of Discourses, 1:50.

<sup>35</sup> Gilbert Charles Orme, arranged and edited by, L. D. S. Scriptures (Utah: The Bookcraft Co., 1947), p. 139.

<sup>36</sup> Edward Biederwolf, Mormonism Under the Searchlight (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), p. 32, citing Orson Pratt in The Seer, p. 159.



received a fulness of grace. Christ had to strive to obtain perfection.

Even Christ himself was not perfect at first; he received not a fulness at first, but he received grace for grace, and he continued to receive more and more until he received a fulness.<sup>37</sup>

The polygamous marriages of Christ. The teaching that Christ was a polygamist is strongly affirmed in Mormon writings. One purpose for Christ's being married to several women was that he might see His seed. "'We say it was Jesus Christ who was married [at Cana to Martha and Mary], whereby he could see his own seed before he was crucified. The reference is to Isaiah 53:10."<sup>38</sup> It is further taught that Christ's frequent visits to the home of Mary and Martha can only be explained on the basis that they were his wives. Another wife of Christ was Mary Magdalene.

'Now let us inquire concerning the wives of Jesus; there were several holy women who greatly loved Jesus and when He arose from the dead He appeared first to these women or at least to one of them, namely Mary Magdalene. Now it would be very natural for a husband in the resurrection to appear first to his own dear wives.'<sup>39</sup>

It is further taught that if Christ was not married, his

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<sup>37</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine Sermons and Writings, op. cit., p. 68.

<sup>38</sup> Van Baalen, op. cit., pp. 137, 138, citing Orson Hyde. See also Biederwolf, op. cit., p. 33, citing Orson Hyde, Journal of Discourses, Vol. II, p. 80.

<sup>39</sup> Biederwolf, op. cit., p. 33, citing Orson Pratt in The Seer, p. 159.



frequent visits with Mary, Martha, and other women was highly unbecoming and improper.

' . . . If He [Christ] was never married, His intimacy with Mary and Martha and the other Mary also, whom Jesus loved, must have been highly unbecoming and improper, to say the best for it. . . .'<sup>40</sup>

Summary. The above study clearly shows that the Mormon Church believes Christ to be the literal first-born of God. They also teach that he had but one nature which is material. His birth was natural, he was not begotten of the Holy Spirit as the Holy Bible teaches, and that he was married to several women, thus sanctioning polygamy.

### III. THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Method of procedure. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit was approached as follows: first, definition; second, the relation of the Spirit to the Father and Son; third, attributes and office work; fourth, summary.

A definition of the Holy Spirit. The Doctrine and Covenants state:

The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 33, citing Orson Hyde from Journal of Discourses, Vol. IV, p. 259.

<sup>41</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 130:22.



The Holy Spirit is here defined as a personage of Spirit not possessing body and flesh as does the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is further defined as divine fluid. ". . . There are many expressions in the Scripture which plainly show that the Holy Ghost exists, not only as a person, . . . but as a diffused fluid substance."<sup>42</sup> Being divine fluid the Holy Spirit, according to Mormon belief, is capable of being omnipresent (neither God the Father or Christ are omnipresent). This movement quotes the following Bible references as an attempt to prove the Holy Spirit to be divine fluid: Numbers 11:25; Psalms 89:7-10; John 3:34; and II Peter 1:21. There are many ramifications to the teaching that the Holy Spirit is fluid. These are comprehensively set forth in the following statement:

Man beholds himself surrounded by a universe of materials, filled with power. Every particle seems to be active and energetic. At one time we see these materials exerting a strong cohesive tendency; at another, manifesting a chemical affinity, or exhibiting the law of universal gravitation.

. . . . .  
But what is this living, self-moving, powerful, and most wonderful fluid? Which arranges, combines, harmonizes, and moves its materials? . . . [outward exhibitions of glory] (*italics in the original*) . . . 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.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> "The Holy Spirit", Utah Pamphlets, Vol. 16 (Free Public Library, Salt Lake City, Utah), p. 50.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 49,50.



Every particle of the Holy Spirit is intelligent, and has size and shape. "Each atom of the Holy Spirit is intelligent, and, like all other matter, has solidity, form, and size, and occupies space."<sup>44</sup>

The relation of the Holy Spirit to the Father and Son.

The Mormon Church teaches that the Holy Spirit acts as an agent to carry out the will of the Father and Son. "[The Holy Spirit] operates by the word of the Father and Son, . . . God speaks, and the Omnipresent Spirit acts upon the materials with which it is associated."<sup>45</sup> The influence of deity is manifested to the world through the ever present Holy Spirit. Also, the Holy Spirit is the "light of Christ, or of truth, which proceeds forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space, and to quicken the understanding of men."<sup>46</sup> Without the Holy Spirit, God could not impress his will upon the lives of men today and man could never be aware of a God, high in the heavens, who is unable to present himself in person to all of humanity.

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<sup>44</sup> Orson Pratt, "The Kingdom of God," A Series of Pamphlets on the Doctrines of the Gospel (Utah: George Q. Cannon & Son Co., 1891), p. 49.

<sup>45</sup> "The Holy Spirit", op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>46</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine Sermons and Writings, op. cit., p. 60.



Attributes of the Holy Spirit. The Mormon Church believes that the Holy Spirit possesses all the attributes of the Father and Son. "This boundless ocean of Spirit possesses in every part, however minute, a will, a self-moving power, knowledge, goodness, love, holiness, justice, mercy. . ."<sup>47</sup> Possessing these attributes the Holy Spirit becomes ". . . the witness of the Father and the Son, declaring to man their attributes, bearing record of the other personages of the Godhead."<sup>48</sup> Mention should also be made regarding the Mormon teaching of the manner in which the Holy Spirit is given or distributed.

'No two persons can receive the same identical particles of this Spirit at the same time; a part thereof of the Holy Spirit will rest upon one man and another part upon another.'<sup>49</sup>

Summary. The Holy Spirit, as defined by the Mormon Church, is a divine fluid and is the only omnipresent person in the Godhead. They also teach that the Holy Spirit possesses all the attributes of the Father and Son and is their representative to man.

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<sup>47</sup> "The Holy Spirit", op. cit., p. 53.

<sup>48</sup> James E. Talmage, Articles of Faith (Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1949), p. 42.

<sup>49</sup> Biederwolf, op. cit., p. 34, citing Series of Pamphlets, "Absurdities of Immaterialism", p. 24.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE MORMON DOCTRINES OF CREATION AND THE FALL

The doctrines of creation and the fall are uniquely and inseparably related in the teachings of the Mormon Church. An understanding of the nature of these two doctrines and their relationship comprised the major emphasis of this chapter.

#### I. DOCTRINE OF CREATION

Method of procedure. The doctrine of creation was logically considered first. It was divided into the following points: first, the pre-existence of the soul; second, the method of creation; third, the image of God in man; fourth, the purpose of creation; fifth, the falsehood of immaterialism.

Pre-existence. The term pre-existence, as used in this discussion, refers to the belief that persons born into this world had a previous existence as spirit beings. This teaching is presented in the Pearl of Great Price.

. . . For I, the Lord God, created all things, of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth. For I, the Lord God, had not caused it to rain upon the face of the earth. And I, the Lord God, had created all the children of men; and not yet a man to till the ground; for in heaven created



I them; and there was not yet flesh upon the earth,  
neither in the water, neither in the air;

. . . . .  
And man became a living soul, the first flesh upon the  
earth, the first man also; nevertheless, all things were  
before created; but spiritually were they created and  
made according to my word.<sup>1</sup>

And in the Doctrine and Covenants we read: "Ye were also in  
the beginning with the Father; that which is Spirit, even the  
Spirit of truth."<sup>2</sup> "For by the power of my Spirit created  
I them; yea, all things both spiritual and temporal -- First  
spiritual, secondly temporal."<sup>3</sup> These Mormon scriptures  
specifically state that all of humanity existed in a spiritual  
state prior to inhabiting this earth.

Talmage, in the Articles of Faith made reference to  
Christ's pre-existence as proof that all humanity pre-existed.

. . . Christ was born a child among mortals; and it  
is consistent to infer that if His earthly birth was the  
union of a preexistent or antemortal spirit with a mortal  
body such also is the birth of every member of the human  
family.<sup>4</sup>

The above reference is inference by analogy. It is therefore  
not the strongest argument. Talmage proceeded however, to

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Smith, The Pearl of Great Price (Utah: The  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951), Moses 3:5,7.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Smith, The Doctrine and Covenants (Utah: The  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1950), 93:23.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 29:31,32.

<sup>4</sup> James E. Talmage, Articles of Faith (Utah: The  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1949), p. 193.



give conclusive evidence of pre-existence from the Bible in the following observation:

. . . We are not left to mere inference on a basis of analogy; the scriptures plainly teach that the spirits of mankind are known and numbered unto God before their earthly advent. In his farewell administration to Israel Moses sang: 'Remember the days of old . . . when the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.' . . . it is evident . . . that the number was known prior to the existence of the Israelitish nation in the flesh; this is most easily explained on the basis of a previous existence in which the spirits of the future nation was known.<sup>5</sup>

The Mormon Church further teaches that these pre-existent spirits were literally begotten by God the Father. "Things were first created spiritually; the father actually begat the spirits, and they were brought forth and lived with him. . . ."<sup>6</sup> Assuming the preceding to be true, it becomes apparent that a study of Adam must begin before the account recorded in Genesis chapter two. Joseph Smith provided a brief, but important statement about the pre-existent Adam.

The Father called all spirits before Him at the creation of man, and organized them. He (Adam) is the head, and was told to multiply. . . . He will have to give an account of his stewardship, . . .<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Loc. cit., citing Deuteronomy 32:7,8.

<sup>6</sup> John A Widtsoe, selected and arranged, Discourses of Brigham Young (Utah: The Deseret News Press, 1925), pp. 76,77, citing Journal of Discourses, 4:218.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph Fielding Smith, compiler, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (Utah: The Deseret News Press, 1938), p. 158.



The method of creation. An exegetical treatment of the word, baurau (meaning "create" found in Genesis 1:1), was given by Joseph Smith as follows:

Now, the word create came from the word baurau, which does not mean to create out of nothing; it means to organize; the same as a man would organize materials and build a ship. Hence we infer that God had materials to organize the world out of chaos--chaotic matter, which is element, and in which dwells all the glory. Element had an existence from the time he had. The pure principles which can never be destroyed; they may be organized and re-organized, but not destroyed. They had no beginning, and can have no end.<sup>8</sup>

Added to this definition is the statement of Brigham Young.

Worlds are made of crude element which floats, without bounds in the eternities--in the immensity of space; an eternity of matter--no limits to it, in its natural crude state, and the power of the Almighty has this influence and wisdom--when he speaks he is obeyed, and matter comes together and is organized.<sup>9</sup>

Out of this limitless mass of eternal matter, God organized the earth.

Following this organization, God proceeded to make man. The Mormon Church believes this process involved two specific acts: first, a body was formed from the dust of the earth; and second, a pre-existent spirit descended and indwelt the tabernacle of clay. When the pre-existent spirit entered the body, the earthly form was animated.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 350, 351.

<sup>9</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 74, citing Journal of Discourses 13:248.



Image of God in man. Man was created in the image of God. Primarily, the Mormon Church believes this image was patterned after the body of God. "In the image of his own body, male and female, created he them, . . ."10 [*italics not in original*]

Behold, this body, [Christ's] which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh.<sup>11</sup>

Another phase of this image, is that within man there resides a germ of deity. This was made possible because the pre-existent spirit was a progeny of God and inherited a part of its progenitor. "We are the sons and daughters of celestial Beings, and the germ of the Deity dwells within us. . . ."12

When we look upon the human face we look upon the image of our Father and God; there is a divinity in each person . . . and with this is amalgamated the human, the earthly, the weaker portions of our nature. . . .<sup>13</sup>

Another aspect of the "image", is intelligence. When matter was organized it was capacitated to receive intelligence. "It is brought together, organized, and capacitated

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<sup>10</sup> Pearl of Great Price, Moses 6:9.

<sup>11</sup> Joseph Smith, The Book of Mormon (Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1948), Ether 3:16.

<sup>12</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 78, citing Journal of Discourses, 10:192.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 78, 9:291.



to receive knowledge and intelligence."<sup>14</sup> This intelligence was neither created nor made.

'Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.' The most important part of each one of us, our intelligence, is a self-existent entity or being which was never created or made, 'neither indeed can be.'<sup>15</sup> That simply means that man is by nature an immortal being.

If intelligence is eternal the question of memory presents a problem. Why is it that man does not remember the pre-existent state? This question was resolved by Brigham Young who declared:

It has also been decreed by the Almighty that spirits, upon taking bodies, shall forget all they had known previously, or they could not have a day of trial--could not have an opportunity for proving themselves in darkness and temptation, in unbelief and wickedness, to prove themselves worthy of eternal existence.<sup>16</sup>

The image of God also has reference to purity and righteousness. "We were created upright, pure, and holy, in the image of . . . our God."<sup>17</sup>

Purpose of creation. This mortal existence is but a stage in the eternal progression of man. Its object and purpose was enumerated by Joseph Fielding Smith.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 74, 3:365.

<sup>15</sup> Sidney B. Sperry, Themes of the Restored Gospel (Utah: Bookcraft Publishing Co., 1950), p. 32, citing Doctrine and Covenants, 93:29.

<sup>16</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 93, citing Journal of Discourses, 6:333.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 79, 3:365.



The object of our earthly existence is that we may have a fulness of joy, and that we may become the sons and daughters of God, in the fullest sense of the word, being heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, to be kings and priests unto God, to inherit glory, dominion, exaltation, thrones and every power and attribute developed and possessed by our Heavenly Father. This is the object of our being on this earth. In order to attain unto this exalted position, it is necessary that we go through this mortal experience, or probation, by which we may prove ourselves worth, through the aid of our elder brother Jesus. The spirit without the body is not perfect. It is not capacitated, without the body, to possess a fulness of the glory of God, and therefore it cannot, without the body, fulfill its destiny. We are foreordained to become conformed to the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ; and in order that we may become like unto him, we must follow in his foot steps, even until we Sanctify ourselves by the law of truth and righteousness.<sup>18</sup>

The reference in the above quotation to an inheritance of dominion, exaltation, and thrones, suggests the teaching that redeemed man will someday become like God. This belief was presented in Chapter Three under the Doctrine of God.

However, one brief statement will be incorporated here:

. . . To be made angels, Gods--beings who will hold control over the elements, and have power by their word to command the creation and redemption of worlds, or to extinguish suns by their breath, and disorganize worlds, hurling them back into their chaotic state. This is what you and I are created for.<sup>19</sup>

Another purpose for man and woman being created, is that they might enter into an eternal marriage relationship

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<sup>18</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine Sermons and Writings (eighth edition; Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1949), p. 439.

<sup>19</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 74, citing Journal of Discourses, 3:356.



which would continue throughout eternity. There will be procreation beyond this life, but the union of man and woman must take place in this life. The view held in Protestant circles that marriage ceases with this life is claimed by the Mormon Church to be a pollution of gospel truth.

The notion that is almost universal that marriage is a contract which ends at death did not originate in the gospel. It was introduced by the enemy of truth who has sworn to overthrow the kingdom of God if he can. Paul declared that 'Neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord,' and the Lord said he would give to man a help meet for him. That is a help that would answer all the necessary requirements, not only of companionship, but to help him to fill the measure of creation, which neither the man nor the woman, alone, could accomplish. Orson Pratt commenting on this need, has said: 'The Lord ordained marriage between male and female as a law through which spirits should come here and take tabernacles, and enter into the second state of existence. The Lord himself solemnized the first marriage pertaining to this globe, . . .'<sup>20</sup>

Falsehood of immaterialism. The Mormon Church in defense of its position of eternity of matter has written against those who make spirit nonmaterial. Orson Pratt forwards the following logic:

The spirit or mind has a relation to space, is evident from the fact of its location in the body. The body itself exists in space. No point can be assumed in the body but what has a relation to the surrounding space or extension. Therefore spirit must have a relation to extension or it cannot exist in the body.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Joseph F. Smith, The Restoration of All Things (Utah: The Deseret News, 1944), p. 244.

<sup>21</sup> Orson Pratt, "Absurdities of Immaterialism", Pamphlet (Liverpool: R. James, Printer, [n. d.]), p. 12.



Assuming that the spirit is necessarily related to space, precludes any theory that spirit may be free of matter. In this same article, Orson Pratt pronounces immaterialism absurd and unworth as a Christian philosophy. "The doctrine of immaterialism, in our estimate, is false, and in the highest degree absurd, and unworthy the belief of any true Christian philosopher."<sup>22</sup>

## II. DOCTRINE OF THE FALL

It was stated in the beginning of this chapter, that the doctrines of creation and the fall are uniquely and inseparably related. The Mormon Church teaches that God's economy has necessarily made this true.

Method of procedure. The doctrine of the fall was approached by the following divisions: first, the relation of the devil to God and Christ; second, the fall as planned by God; third, the fall and its results; fourth, the doctrine of depravity; fifth, conclusion.

The relation of the devil to God and Christ. In the Book of Moses, found in the Pearl of Great Price, a record of creation and the fall is given. It is similar, and in many places identical, to the opening chapters of Genesis. The

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 1.



Book of Moses, however, describes the relation of Satan to God and Christ in a manner not found either in Genesis or any other part of the Bible. In chapter four, verses 1-4 in the Book of Moses, both Christ and Satan are stated as being the spiritual offsprings from God the Father. Christ is the first or elder brother. According to this record, God had revealed his plan to create man. Also, a plan of redemption had been discussed. It was the purpose of God the Father that Christ should be the redeemer. However, Satan desired this exalted position and endeavored to persuade the Father to allow him to take Christ's place. Satan submitted a plan of redemption which was to "destroy the free agency of man by obtaining power to force the human family to do his will, promising the Father that by such means he would redeem all mankind so that not one of them should be lost."<sup>23</sup> The record of these events and their results are quoted below:

And I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses, saying: That Satan, whom thou hast commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten, is the same which was from the beginning, and he came before me, saying--Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor.

But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me--Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.

Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord

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<sup>23</sup> Talmage, op. cit., p. 55.



God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast down;

And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.<sup>24</sup>

Satan's attempt to rob Christ of his rightful place has been compared to the story of Jacob and Esau. Satan was attempting to steal Christ's birthright. "There was a devil in heaven, and he strove to possess the birthright of the Savior."<sup>25</sup> Because of Satan's disobedience he was cast from heaven to this earth. He was not alone however, for one-third of the hosts of heaven had chosen to follow this Son of the Morning. Brigham Young described who these rebellious spirits were. "Let me tell you that it was one-third part of the spirits who were prepared to take tabernacles upon this earth. . . ."<sup>26</sup> One great punishment inflicted upon Satan for his rebellion was that he could never possess an earthly tabernacle. Joseph Smith pointed this out as the "greatest" punishment brought upon the devil. "He sought for things which were unlawful. Hence he was sent down, and it is said he drew many away with

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<sup>24</sup> The Pearl of Great Price, Moses 4:1-4.

<sup>25</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p 104, citing Journal of Discourses, 8:279,280.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 84, 5:54,55.



him; and the greatness of his punishment is that he shall not have a tabernacle."<sup>27</sup>

The fall a part of God's plan. God being all wise knew man would fall when tempted. In fact, the Mormon Church teaches that he planned the fall to be a means

. . . whereby man could be brought into direct experience with good and evil, so that of his own agency he might elect the one or the other, and thus be prepared by the experiences of mortal probation for the exaltation provided in the beneficent plan of his creation.<sup>28</sup>

Satan had not deceived God when he proposed a substitute program. Rather, Satan was being used, unwittingly, to fulfill the plans of the Father "for he knew not the mind of God."<sup>29</sup>

The fall and its results. Before considering the fall and its results it was necessary to compare the importance of the two great commandments given to Adam and Eve. The first of these commandments was that man should not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.<sup>30</sup> If this commandment should be broken, the penalty of death would result. The second commandment was that Adam and Eve were to

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<sup>27</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, op. cit., p. 297.

<sup>28</sup> Talmage, op. cit., p. 68.

<sup>29</sup> The Pearl of Great Price, Moses 4:6.

<sup>30</sup> Genesis 2:16,17.



be fruitful and replenish the earth.<sup>31</sup> Viewing these two commandments the question is asked, which of these is the greatest? Mormonism believes that the commandment to be fruitful and replenish the earth is greater. This order of importance is stated by Talmage.

Adam and his wife were placed in the garden. They had been given dominion 'over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.' With this great power were associated certain commandments, the first of which in point of importance was that they 'be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it'; then, that they refrain from eating or ever touching the fruit of a certain tree, the tree of knowledge of good and evil, . . .<sup>32</sup>

This greater commandment could not be fulfilled, however, until the lesser commandment had been broken. The reason for the need of this disobedient act was that Adam and Eve came into this world as celestial beings. "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. . . ."<sup>33</sup> After their pre-existent spirits had indwelt the earthly tabernacle, they still remained immortal. In this condition (of immortality) they were unable to act in the capacity of

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<sup>31</sup> Genesis 1:28.

<sup>32</sup> Talmage, op. cit., p. 64.

<sup>33</sup> Jan Karel Van Baalen, The Chaos of Cults (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1946), p. 134, citing Journal of Discourses, Vol. 1, p. 50.



procreators. Therefore, it was necessary for them to break the lesser command, to be obedient unto God, in order to fulfill the greater commandment.

Adam and Eve could never have been the parents of a mortal posterity had they not themselves become mortal; mortality was an essential element in the divine plan respecting the earth and its appointed inhabitants; and, as a means of introducing mortality, the Lord placed before the progenitors of the race a law [lesser commandment], knowing what would follow.<sup>34</sup>

Is it any wonder that Adam and Eve rejoiced because of the fall?

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 Adam and Eve blessed the name of God, and they made all things known unto their sons and their daughters.<sup>35</sup>

The decisions of both Adam and Eve were instrumental in the fall. The essential part of each, however, was different. Eve was deceived by Satan when she was persuaded to take of the fruit. She had fulfilled the divine plan of God through ignorance.

Eve was fulfilling the foreseen purposes of God by the part she took in the great drama of the fall; yet she did not partake of the forbidden fruit with that object in view, but with intent to act contrary to the divine command, being deceived by the sophistries of Satan, . . .<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Talmage, op. cit., p. 69.

<sup>35</sup> The Pearl of Great Price, Moses 5:11,12.

<sup>36</sup> Talmage, op. cit., p. 69.



Adam, on the other hand, was not deceived. He deliberately chose to join with Eve in her decision to partake of the fruit. By so doing he knowingly helped to carry out the plan of God.

Adam's part in the great event [fall] was essentially different from that of his wife; he was not deceived; on the contrary he deliberately decided to do as Eve desired, that he might carry out the purposes of his Maker with respect to the race of men, . . .<sup>37</sup>

The Mormon Church teaches that the blessings of the fall were innumerable. The joy of becoming mortal has been considered, but there are others that need to be examined. First, Mormonism maintains that if man had remained in a state of innocency he could never have known what was truly good. This is true, because doing good can only come with the knowledge of sin. "And they would have had no children; wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin."<sup>38</sup>

And the Lord spake unto Adam, saying: Inasmuch as thy children are conceived in sin, even so when they begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good.<sup>39</sup>

If man had never tasted good and evil he would have remained forever upon this earth.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 69,70.

<sup>38</sup> Book of Mormon, II Nephi 2:23.

<sup>39</sup> The Pearl of Great Price, Moses 6:55.



And now, behold, if Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end.<sup>40</sup>

Remaining upon this earth, man would have been unable to advance to his next stage of exaltation of becoming a God in the life beyond. Another blessing of the fall is in relation to intelligence. We were created for the purpose of improving our intelligence so that it (intelligence) might be exalted in the next life. Without sin this would have been impossible.

There is not, has not been, and never can be any method, scheme, or plan devised by any being in this world for intelligence to exist eternally and obtain an exaltation, without knowing the good and the evil--without tasting the bitter and the sweet.<sup>41</sup>

Another important result of the fall was the coming of a redeemer. The state of innocency which belonged to Adam and Eve before the fall could never compare with the joy of having a personal redeemer. This great service performed for mankind was stated by Joseph Fielding Smith.

We see, then, that Adam performed for mankind a great service through his transgression. He made it possible for the earth to be peopled. He made it possible for us to pass through all the vicissitudes of mortality and thus find our place in the world to come based on merit through our obedience or disobedience to the commandments of the Lord. He prepared the way for the coming of Jesus

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<sup>40</sup> The Book of Mormon, II Nephi 2:22.

<sup>41</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 101, citing Journal of Discourses 7:237,238.



Christ as our Redeemer to bring back life to a fallen world, through the opening of the graves and the reuniting of the spirit with the body never again to be divided. This great boon will come to all, for it is written: 'For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' If Adam had not fallen there could have been no Savior, and if no Savior there could have been no need for the creation of this earth for it would not have been peopled with its present life.<sup>42</sup>

The last phase of the benefit of the fall to be considered was in the area of free will. Only with the presence of good and sin could man choose and thereby be a free moral agent. "And it must needs be that the devil should tempt the children of men, or they could not be agents unto themselves; for if they never should have bitter they could not know the sweet. . . ."<sup>43</sup> In concluding this study of the blessings resulting from the fall, a pertinent quotation was cited from the writings of President John Taylor. In this statement, the purpose of the fall is stated as a vital and necessary part in the eternal progression of man.

Thus it would appear that if any of the links of this great chain had been broken, it would have interfered with the comprehensive plan of the Almighty pertaining to the salvation and eternal exaltation of those spirits who were His sons and for whom principally the world was made; that they through submission to the requirements of the eternal principle and law governing these matters might possess bodies and these bodies united with the spirits might become living souls, and being the sons of

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<sup>42</sup> Joseph F. Smith, The Restoration of All Things, op. cit., p. 270.

<sup>43</sup> Doctrine and Covenants, 29:39.



God, and made in the image of God, they, through the atonement, might be exalted by obedience to the law of the Gospel; to the Godhead.<sup>44</sup>

The doctrine of depravity. A study of the fall would be incomplete without an analysis of the doctrine of depravity. The Mormon Church does not accept the view of total depravity either in its extensive or intensive form. The reason they object to the doctrine of total depravity is because they teach that the sin principle resides in the flesh. When the spirit enters the body it is pure and undefiled. This is necessarily true because the spirit in its pre-existent state was not contaminated by sin. This teaching is verified in the following quotations: "When our spirits took possession of these tabernacles, they were as pure as the angels of God, wherefore total depravity cannot be a true doctrine."<sup>45</sup>

The spirits that live in these tabernacles were as pure as the heavens, when they entered them. They came to tabernacles that are contaminated, pertaining to the flesh, by the fall of man.

We have to contend against evil passions, or the seeds of iniquity that are sown in the flesh through the fall.<sup>46</sup>

Assuming the above view to be true, the question arises as to how the spirit may become contaminated. Is it immediately

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<sup>44</sup> Van Baalen, op. cit., p. 211, citing John Taylor from The Mediation and Atonement, p. 135.

<sup>45</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 78, citing Journal of Discourses, 10:192.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 79.



defiled when united with the body, or does one have to personally yield to sin? Brigham Young, in the Journal of Discourses provided the answer to these questions.

In the first place the spirit is pure and under the special control and influence of the Lord, but the body is of the earth, and is subject to the power of the devil, and is under the mighty influence of that fallen nature that is of the earth. If the spirit yields to the body, the Devil then has power to overcome the body and spirit of that man, and he looses both.<sup>47</sup>

Having briefly stated the Mormon Church's position on the doctrine of depravity, it may be seen why they have endorsed an optimism which posits in man a greater desire to do good than evil.

Many of us have been taught the doctrine of total depravity -- that man is not naturally inclined to do good. I am satisfied that he is more inclined to do right than to do wrong. There is a greater power within him to shun evil and perform good, than to do the opposite.<sup>48</sup>

This optimism, it may be seen, is logical and consistent with its premise.

Conclusion. To conclude the presentation of the doctrine of the fall, the author has summarized it with a quotation from the Articles of Faith.

It has become a common practice with mankind to heap reproaches upon the progenitors of the family, and to picture the supposed blessed state in which we would be living but for the fall; whereas our first parents are

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 107, 2:255.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 120, 9:247.



entitled to our deepest gratitude for their legacy to posterity -- the means of winning title to glory, exaltation, and eternal lives. But for the opportunity thus given, the spirits of God's offspring would have remained forever in a state of innocent childhood, sinless through no effort of their own; negatively saved, not from sin, but from the opportunity of meeting sin; incapable of winning the honors of victory because prevented from taking part in the conflict. As it is, they are heirs to the birthright of Adam's descendants -- mortality, with its immeasurable possibilities and its God -- given freedom of action. From Father Adam we have inherited all the ills to which flesh is heir; but such are necessarily incident to a knowledge of good and evil, by the proper use of which knowledge may become even as the Gods.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Talmage, op. cit., p. 70.



## CHAPTER V

### THE MORMON DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

The restoration of man from his fallen state comprises a vital aspect in the doctrines of the Mormon Church. It was impossible in the short compass of this study, to present all the interesting details relating to this general theme. An endeavor was made however, to present the major phases in brevity without sacrificing clarity. Special attention was given to those teachings unique to the Mormon Church.

This chapter was divided in the following manner: first, the atonement; second, faith and repentance; third, baptism; fourth, receiving the Holy Spirit; fifth, provision for the dead; sixth, results of salvation; seventh, benefits of salvation administered through proper authority.

The atonement. The word atonement implies the thought of being made one with another person. Used with a theological connotation, it means that man is reconciled or brought back to God. From this definition, we see there must have been a separation. This division came about through the fall, the result of which, was that man (Adam) incurred a debt upon the human race. The contracting of this debt was described by Brigham Young. "Our first parents transgressed the law that was given them in the garden; their eyes were opened. This



created the debt."<sup>1</sup> To meet this debt God graciously provided a vicarious sacrifice, in his first begotten Son. This was necessary because the debt incurred was a "divine debt".

What is the nature of this debt? It is a divine debt. [God says to sinful man]. . . it is impossible for you to pay this debt; I have prepared a sacrifice; I will send my only Begotten Son to pay this divine debt . . . .<sup>2</sup>

Without the provision of an atonement, man would have been hopelessly lost.<sup>3</sup> It is unthinkable however, that God would allow man to remain in a fallen state because the fall, according to Mormon belief, was planned to be a great blessing. God had necessarily obligated himself to provide redemption. This redemption, however, is provisional. "All rational beings have an agency of their own; and according to their own choice they will be saved or damned."<sup>4</sup> If provision has been made for all to be saved, the question arises as to how many will avail themselves of this privilege? The Mormon Church teaches that God's great mercy will be extended so that

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<sup>1</sup> John A. Widtsoe, selected and arranged, Discourses of Brigham Young (Utah: The Deseret News Press, 1925), p. 90, citing Journal of Discourses, 14:71.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 90, 91, 14:71.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Smith, The Book of Mormon (Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1948), Alma 34:9.

<sup>4</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 95, citing Journal of Discourses, 6:97.



only those who have heard the Gospel and openly reject its precious promises or those who have been genuinely saved and sin against the Holy Ghost will be lost. "None are condemned except those who have the privilege of receiving the words of eternal life and refuse to receive them."<sup>5</sup>

The fact is recognized, in all Christendom, that millions have died without the privilege of hearing the Gospel. What will the atonement of Christ do for them? The Mormon Church teaches that Christ will work until all have heard, including those who have passed from this life.

Millions of them have passed away, both in the Christian and in the heathen worlds, just as honest, virtuous and upright as any now living. The Christian world say they are lost; but the Lord will save them, or, at least all who will receive the Gospel.<sup>6</sup>

"Jesus will never cease his work until all are brought up to the enjoyment of a kingdom in the mansions of his father. . ."<sup>7</sup>

Special attention has been given, by Mormon writers, to the sacrificial death of Christ. It is emphasized that Christ voluntarily gave his life upon the cross. No one took it from him. This is important when one realizes that Jesus had within his being the power to withstand death indefinitely.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 90, 8:294.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 93, 13:323.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 86, 13:76.

<sup>8</sup> James E. Talmage, Articles of Faith (Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1949), p. 79.



The motive which sustained the Lord through his earthly mission and strengthened him to face death, was two-fold: "first, the desire to do His Father's will in accomplishing the redemption of mankind; second, His love for humanity, of whose welfare and destiny He had assumed charge."<sup>9</sup> With this motive Christ came into the world, lived, and died, that man might be brought back to God and in the end receive an exaltation, rising to the place of God and becoming a God himself.

To conclude this brief consideration of the atonement, the following is quoted from the Compendium of Mormon Doctrine:

'The word atonement signifies deliverance, through the offering of a ransom, from the penalty of a broken law. As effected by Jesus Christ, it signifies the deliverance, through his death and resurrection, of the earth and everything pertaining to it, from the power which death has obtained over them through the transgression of Adam.'<sup>10</sup>

Faith and Repentance. Faith "is the first principle of . . . [the] Gospel."<sup>11</sup> Without faith it is impossible to be saved and to please God. It has been defined by Talmage as a "full confidence and trust in the being, purposes, and words of God."<sup>12</sup> Faith is always active and positive and will inevitably lead to good works.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>10</sup> James H. Snowden, The Truth About Mormonism (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1926), p. 132, citing Richards from Compendium of Mormon Doctrine, p. 8.

<sup>11</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 236, citing Journal of Discourses, 13:143.

<sup>12</sup> Talmage, op. cit., p. 96.



The Mormon Church makes careful distinction between faith and belief. Belief may be merely intellectual assent without giving oneself completely into the hands of God. Faith, goes beyond mental assent to place complete trust in Christ. Faith therefore comprehends belief. Faith may be demonstrated in events of daily living. The farmer sows his seed, expecting to harvest manyfold. The student pursues his studies expecting to be qualified for his chosen life's work. "Faith thus becomes to us the foundation of hope, from which spring our aspirations, ambitions, and confidences for the future."<sup>13</sup> It is always pleasing to God when man exercises faith toward Christ.

Faith is essential to salvation. "Inasmuch as salvation is attainable only through the mediation and atonement of Christ, and since this is made applicable to individual sin in the measure of obedience to the laws of righteousness, faith in Jesus Christ is indispensable to salvation."<sup>14</sup> This faith must embrace the God-head; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Salvation is promised to those who exercise faith in the God-head and comply with the requirements necessary for a continuous relationship.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 103.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 106.



Essentially, faith is a gift from God. "Though within the reach of all who diligently strive to gain it, faith is nevertheless a divine gift."<sup>15</sup> Whenever man shows sincerity and humility he is in the position to receive divine impressions. As soon as one is willing to open up his heart to the influence of God, he will receive adequate faith to lead him into eternal life.

Faith and works go hand in hand. The importance of works was considered in other divisions of this chapter. Brief mention is made here however, to show their relationship. Faith is passive without works. To claim faith without evidence is to claim something one does not have. The Mormon Church teaches that the belief of justification by faith alone is "a most pernicious doctrine."<sup>16</sup> Mormonism maintains that Christ specifically taught that works were "essential to the validity of profession and the efficacy of faith."<sup>17</sup>

Closely associated with faith and immediately following it is repentance. It has been classified as the second principle of the Gospel, faith being the first. The term repentance may be defined as the ". . . duty required of all

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 107.

<sup>16</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>17</sup> Loc. cit.



who would obtain forgiveness for transgression. . . ."<sup>18</sup> It is accompanied by godly sorrow for sin and a reformation of life. It embodies the following three points: "(1) a conviction of guilt; (2) . . . sin; and (3) an earnest determination to forsake sin and to accomplish good."<sup>19</sup>

Whenever one comes to the realization of God's existence and authority (by faith), and desires to please the Father, he will repent of his past life. This provides the ". . . first step toward the blessed state of forgiveness. . . ."<sup>20</sup> Not only must one be willing to repent of his sins, he must also be willing to forgive others. Repentance will have no merit if it is not directed to the right source. Jesus Christ is the only source under heaven and it is to him that one must repent.

Repentance is essential to salvation. "In the obtaining of divine mercy repentance is as indispensable as faith. . . ."<sup>21</sup> The necessity of repentance is extended to all the human race for in Romans 3:23 we read: "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Forgiveness is promised to all providing genuine repentance is evident.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 109.

<sup>19</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>20</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 113.



Repentance like faith, is a gift from God.

It is not to be had for the careless asking; it may not be found upon the highway; nevertheless it is given with boundless liberality unto those who have brought forth works that warrant its bestowal. That is to say, all who prepare themselves for repentance will be led by the humbling and softening influence of the Holy Spirit to the actual possession of this great gift.<sup>22</sup>

Repentance is granted unto us by God and is a demonstration of His goodness.

Baptism. The Mormon Church has declared that baptism is essential to salvation. The reason for this belief is that ". . . remission of sins constitutes a special purpose of baptism, and as no soul can be saved in the kingdom of God with unforgiven sins, it is plain that baptism is essential to salvation."<sup>23</sup> Salvation is promised only on the condition that the laws and ordinances of the Gospel are obeyed. The Mormon Church believes that baptism is an essential ordinance and is necessarily required of all who have attained accountable years. The Pearl of Great Price provides the reason why this ordinance of baptism is necessary to salvation.

. . . Inasmuch as ye were born into the world by water, and blood, and the spirit, which I have made, and so became of dust a living soul, even so ye must be born again into the kingdom of heaven, of water, and of the

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 114.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 128.



Spirit, and be cleansed by blood, even the blood of mine  
Only Begotten; . . .<sup>24</sup>

Turning to the Bible the Mormon Church cites John 3:5 as a proof that baptism is essential to salvation. ". . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Also, in Acts 22:16, Ananias exhorts Paul to be baptized and thereby wash away his sins. "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." When one has properly fulfilled the commandments he has come to the place where remission of sins may be effected. "And the first fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism cometh by faith unto the fulfilling the commandments; and the fulfilling the commandments bringeth remission of sins."<sup>25</sup>

The Mormon Church clearly teaches that sins are not forgiven and remitted until one enters into the act of baptism. ". . . For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water; and then [*italics not in original*] cometh a remission of your sins by fire and by the Holy Ghost."<sup>26</sup>  
It teaches on the other hand that the water does not cleanse

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<sup>24</sup> Joseph Smith, The Pearl of Great Price (Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951), Moses 6:59.

<sup>25</sup> The Book of Mormon, Moroni 8:25.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., II Nephi 31:17.



but is merely a symbol of purification. The place of water in relation to sin and salvation was presented by Brigham Young as follows:

. . . the Lord said, 'If the sinner will repent of his sins, and go down into the waters of baptism, and there be buried in the likeness of being put into the earth and buried, and again be delivered from the water, in the likeness of being born--if in the sincerity of his heart he will do this, his sins shall be washed away. Will the water of itself wash them away? No; but keeping the commandments of God will cleanse away the stain of sin. [Italics not in original]

In the beginning God cursed the earth; but did he curse all things pertaining to it? No, he did not curse the water, but he blessed it.<sup>27</sup>

Though water is not claimed to have any virtue, the Mormon Church believes that the act of baptism is necessary to cleanse away sin.

If an individual believes in Christ and repents of his sins receiving the witness of the Holy Spirit (that God is love), but does not comply with the requirement of baptism, he is not saved. He has not entered into the kingdom of God.

Hundreds and thousands of people have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and repented of their sins, and have had the Holy Spirit to witness unto them that God is love, that they loved him and that he loved them, and yet they are not in his kingdom. They have not complied with the necessary requirements, they have not entered in at the door.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 247, citing Journal of Discourses, 2:4; 7:162.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 236, 13:57.



The method or mode of baptism is also of vital importance. The Mormon Church teaches that this mode was established and taught to Adam. When God expelled Adam from the garden he gave the following promise:

If thou wilt turn unto me, and harken unto my voice, and believe, and repent of all thy transgressions, and be baptized, even in water . . . ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. . . . And it came to pass, when the Lord had spoken with Adam, our father, that Adam cried unto the Lord, and he was caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and was carried down into the water, and was laid under the water, and was brought forth out of the water.<sup>29</sup>

Adam was carried down into the water. Therefore the mode of baptism, from the first, was immersion. Strong emphasis is placed upon this mode as the only true form. All other methods are wholly inadequate. The Book of Mormon prescribes this mode and excludes all others. "And then shall ye immerse them in the water . . . and according as I have commanded you thus shall ye baptize. And there shall be no disputations among you. . . ."30

Receiving the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was promised to the early church and was given on the Day of Pentecost. Receiving the Holy Spirit, is classified as a "second baptism". "John the Baptist, proclaiming in the

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<sup>29</sup> The Pearl of Great Price, Moses 6:52,64.

<sup>30</sup> The Book of Mormon, III Nephi 11:26,28.



wilderness repentance and baptism by water, foretold a second and higher baptism, which he characterized as being of fire and the Holy Ghost . . . "31 The Bible speaks plainly regarding this second baptism as seen in John 3:5 where Nicodemus is informed that he must be ". . . born of the water and of the Spirit." The Mormon Church believes the necessary prerequisite to receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to be ". . . baptized by water for the remission of sins. . . ."32

The Mormon Church clearly teaches that the Holy Spirit is initially received into the life when an oral ordinance of blessing is pronounced by proper authority.

The bestowal of the Holy Ghost, which is to be regarded as a conferred right to His ministrations, is effected through the ordinance of an oral blessing pronounced upon the candidate by the specified authority of the Holy Priesthood, accompanied by the imposition of the hands of him or those officiating.<sup>33</sup>

"And whoso having faith you shall confirm in my church, by the laying on of the hands, and I will bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost upon them."<sup>34</sup>

The Holy Spirit is called a Comforter in the Bible. He is such because He indwells the life of the believer

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<sup>31</sup> Talmage, op. cit., p. 157.

<sup>32</sup> Joseph Smith, The Doctrine and Covenants (Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1950), 84:64.

<sup>33</sup> Talmage, op. cit., p. 165.

<sup>34</sup> The Doctrine and Covenants, 33:15.



representing the will and purpose of God and Christ.<sup>35</sup> The Mormon Church teaches that the Holy Spirit is the only member of the Godhead who can abide in our life because He is not confined to a body as is God the Father and Christ.

Provision for the dead. Of the great numbers of people who have populated this earth, only a relatively few have heard the Gospel and fewer still have responded favorably. The Mormon Church teaches that in the course of history there have been long periods of darkness when no one on earth was authorized to represent the Lord (from the last apostles [approximately 100 A.D.] to 1830 when salvation was claimed to have been restored to the earth through Joseph Smith).

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<sup>35</sup> Christ is classified as the second comforter. He does not abide with the Christian, but appears in visions. Great mysteries are revealed when Christ makes an appearance.

Now what is this other Comforter. It is no more nor less than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; . . . when any man obtains this last Comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear unto him from time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him, and the Lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; and this is the state and place the ancient Saints arrived at when they had such glorious visions -- Isaiah, Ezekiel, John upon the Isle of Patmos, St. Paul in the three heavens, and all the Saints who held communion with the general assembly and Church of the First Born. Joseph F. Smith, compiler, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (fifth edition; Utah: The Deseret News Press, 1938), p. 150, 151.



In the justice of God no soul shall be condemned under any law that has not been made known unto him. Therefore, humanity will be given a second chance or an opportunity to be saved beyond the grave.

To provide this opportunity, there is and will be a proclamation of the Gospel in the spirit world. This teaching, according to Mormon belief, did not originate with the supposed restoration of the Gospel in these last days, rather, it was decreed by God from "before the foundation of the world."<sup>36</sup> Both Moses and Elijah were supposed to have been strong advocates of this doctrine. Mormonism believes one essential purpose for Moses building the tabernacle in the wilderness was to provide a place where the Israelites (Levites) might baptize for the dead. "For this cause I commanded Moses that he should build a tabernacle, . . . your anointings, and your washings, and your baptisms for the dead, . . . by the sons of Levi . . . are ordained by the ordinance of my holy house, . . ."<sup>37</sup> It is taught by the Mormon Church that Solomon built the "temple for the purpose of giving endowments, [which would include baptism for the dead] . . ."<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 308.

<sup>37</sup> The Doctrine and Covenants, 124:38,39.

<sup>38</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 602, citing Journal of Discourses, 18:303.



The Mormon Church attempts to prove the teaching of a second chance for the dead in the ministry of Christ. To advance this teaching they cite I Peter 4:6: "For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." It is taught by the Mormon Church that this extensive ministry to the dead was initiated between the death of Christ and his resurrection.

By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water (I Peter 3:19-20).

Commenting on the above Scripture, Talmage says,

If it was deemed proper and just that the Gospel be carried to the spirits who were disobedient in the days of Noah, it is reasonable to conclude that like opportunities shall be placed within the reach of others who have rejected the word at different times.<sup>39</sup>

The Mormon Church teaches that Christ not only preached to the dead, but instructed other spirits (who were saved in this life) how the kingdom might be built up in the spirit world.

There is an opportunity for men who are in the spirit to receive the Gospel. Jesus, while his body lay in the grave two nights and one day, went to the world of spirits to show the brethren how they should build up the kingdom, and bring spirits to the knowledge of the truth in the spirit world; he went to set them the pattern there, as

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<sup>39</sup> Talmage, op. cit., p. 148.



he had done on this earth. Hence you perceive that there, spirits have the privilege of embracing the truth.<sup>40</sup>

Another Scriptural proof used to advance this teaching is found in the statement made to the thief on the cross. Jesus said, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). Three days later Christ appeared to Mary Magdalene and said, "I have not yet ascended to my father" (John 20:17). Where had Jesus gone? Evidently not to heaven, but rather, had journeyed to the abode of the dead where countless numbers were waiting to hear the Gospel and be saved.

Mormonism maintains that the Apostle Paul taught this doctrine. However, they believe that because of faulty translation it is not too clearly preserved. Only one reference remains that teaches this provision for the dead. This reference is found in I Corinthians 15:29, "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all?"

It is further taught that Christ's ministry among the dead was foretold by Isaiah the prophet. "And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall be visited" (Isaiah 24:22). Isaiah later declared that Jesus was "to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from

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<sup>40</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 608, 609, citing Journal of Discourses, 2:138.



the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house" (Isaiah 42:7).

Another verse in the Bible used to support this doctrine is Malachi 4:6, ". . . And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." Joseph Smith provided the following explanation of this verse:

I will give you a quotation from one of the prophets, who had his eye fixed on the restoration of the priesthood, the glories to be revealed in the last days, and in an especial manner this most glorious of all subjects belonging to the everlasting gospel, namely, the baptism for the dead; for Malachi says, last chapter, verses 5th and 6th: 'Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.'

I might have rendered a plainer translation to this, but it is sufficiently plain to suit my purpose as it stands. It is sufficient to know, in this case, that the earth will be smitten with a curse unless there is a welding link of some kind or other between the fathers and the children, upon some subject or other--and behold what is that subject? It is the baptism for the dead. For we without them cannot be made perfect; neither can they without us be made perfect. Neither can they nor we be made perfect without those who have died in the gospel also; for it is necessary in the ushering in of the dispensation of the fulness of times, which dispensation is now beginning to usher in, that a whole and complete and perfect union, and welding together of dispensations, and keys, and powers, and glories should take place, and be revealed from the days of Adam even to the present time.<sup>41</sup>

The Mormon Church believes the preaching in the spirit world is accompanied by the ordinance of baptism here on earth.

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<sup>41</sup> The Doctrine and Covenants, 128:17,18.



Their reason for this is twofold: first, baptism is essential to salvation; second, those in the spirit world are not able to be baptized.

You may ask if they are baptized there? No. Can they have hands laid upon them for the gift of the Holy Ghost? No. None of the outward ordinances that pertain to the flesh are administered there, but the light, glory, and power of the Holy Ghost are enjoyed just as freely as upon this earth; and there are laws which govern and control the spirit world, and to which they are subject.<sup>42</sup>

This baptism is performed by proxy. The man "is ordained and receives his washings, anointings, and endowments for the male portion of his and his wife's progenitors, and his wife for the female portion."<sup>43</sup> In order for a member of the Mormon Church to know his ancestors and be led as to whom he should be baptized for, the following advice is given:

You will enter into the temple of the Lord and begin to offer up ordinances before the Lord for your dead. Says this or that man, I want to save such a person--I want to save my father; and he straightway goes forth in the ordinance of baptism, and is confirmed, and washed, and anointed, and ordained to the blessings of the holy Priesthood for his ancestors? Before his work is finished, a great many of the Elders of Israel in Mount Zion will become pillars in the temple of God, to go no more out. They will eat and drink and sleep there; and they will often have occasion to say, 'Somebody came to the temple last night; we did not know who he was, but he was no doubt a brother, and told us a great many things we did not before understand. He gave us the names of a great many of our forefathers that are not on record, and he

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<sup>42</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 609, citing Journal of Discourses, 2:138.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., pp. 620, 621, 3:372.



gave me my true lineage and the names of my forefathers for hundreds of years back. . . .<sup>44</sup>

Baptism for the dead must be administered in a Mormon Temple. No other place will suffice.

For there is not a place found on the earth that he [Christ] may come to and restore again that which was lost unto you, or which he hath taken away, even the fulness of the priesthood. For a baptismal font there is not upon the earth, that they, my saints, may be baptized for those who are dead--For this ordinance belongeth to my house, . . .<sup>45</sup>

The Mormon Church further teaches that those in the spirit world cannot be forced to accept Christ even though the ordinances are performed in this life. The spirits must exercise their free moral agency.

As has been suggested, the Mormon Church believes numerous saints are in the spirit world preaching. They believe Joseph Smith led in this great movement (of preaching the Gospel to the spirit world) in this latter day.

The prophet Joseph Smith held the keys of this dispensation on this side of the veil, and he will hold them throughout the countless ages of eternity. He went into the spirit world to unlock the prison doors and to preach the gospel to the millions of spirits who are in darkness, and every apostle, every seventy, every elder, etc., who has died in the faith, as soon as he passes to the other side of the veil, enters into the work of the ministry,

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., pp. 627-628, 6:294-295.

<sup>45</sup> The Doctrine and Covenants, 124:28-30.



and there is a thousand times more to preach there than there is here.<sup>46</sup>

Wilford Woodruff stated that if one could see beyond the veil of death, he would no doubt hear the pleas of saints to come and help.

I have felt of late as if our brethren on the other side of the veil had held a council, and that they had said to this one, and that one, 'Cease thy work on earth, come hence, we need help,' and they have called this man and that man. It has appeared so to me in seeing the many men who have been called from our midst lately.<sup>47</sup>

If God has made provision for the dead, the question arises as to the nature of hell and punishment for those who reject all opportunities. The Mormon Church teaches that there is a place provided for those who reject all opportunities in this life and the life to come, and that their punishment will be just but not eternal except for those who deliberately sin against the Holy Ghost, thereby committing the unpardonable sin. "It is written that 'all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men' who receive me and repent; 'but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven unto men.'<sup>48</sup> Those who commit the unpardonable sin become an angel to the devil and are forever

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<sup>46</sup> Homer G. Durham, arranged and edited by, The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff (Utah: The Bookcraft Co., 1946), p. 77, citing Journal of Discourses, 22:333-334, October 8, 1881.

<sup>47</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>48</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine Sermons and Writings (eighth edition; Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1949), p. 15.



lost.<sup>49</sup> Mormonism believes the duration of punishment for those who have not committed the unpardonable sin is determined only by God.

How long the damned remain in hell, I know not, nor what degree of suffering they endure. If we could by any means compute how much wickedness they are guilty of, it might be possible to ascertain the amount of suffering they will receive. They will receive according as their deeds have been while in the body. God's punishment is eternal, but that does not prove that a wicked person will remain eternally in a state of punishment.<sup>50</sup>

. . . Every son and daughter of Adam, except the sons of perdition, who will be cast into hell. Others will suffer the wrath of God--will suffer all the Lord can demand at their hands, or justice can require of them; and when they have suffered the wrath of God till the utmost farthing is paid, they will be brought out of prison. Is this dangerous doctrine to preach? Some consider it dangerous; but it is true that every person who does not sin away the day of grace, and become an angel to the Devil, will be brought forth to inherit a kingdom of glory.<sup>51</sup>

It seems that this punishment is meted out only after ample opportunity is given, in the spirit world to repent. After the sentence has been served, Mormonism believes they will be given another opportunity to repent. They maintain that it is quite probable that all will accept Christ after enduring their punishment.

Great value is placed by the Mormon Church upon the restoration of "the doctrine of a chance" beyond this world.

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<sup>49</sup> Widtsoe, op. cit., p. 121, citing Journal of Discourses, 3:93.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 586, 9:147.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 584-585, 8:154.



In the Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine, the following phrase was given as to the value of this teaching:

GENEALOGICAL WORK. I am myself a firm believer that more people have been interested in the gospel on account of the restoration again to the Church of the work for the dead than through almost any other single thing. I know of a great many converts I have met who had no interest in the Church until the doctrine of redemption for the dead was taught to them.<sup>52</sup>

Results of salvation. Special attention needed to be given to the Mormon teaching concerning the results of salvation. Though some have been suggested previously, a grouping of them will be helpful. First, attention was given to the universal aspect of the atonement. When Christ died upon the cross he provided universal forgiveness from Adam's transgression.

'We believe that through the sufferings, death, and atonement of Jesus Christ all mankind, without one exception, are to be completely and fully redeemed, both body and spirit, from the endless banishment and curse to which they were consigned by Adam's transgression;  
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Hence came the saying abroad among the people, That the Son of God hath atoned for original guilt, wherein the sins of the parents cannot be answered upon the heads of the children, for they are whole from the foundation of the world.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Joseph F. Smith, op. cit., p. 33, citing The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine, 23:9.

<sup>53</sup> Talmage, op. cit., p. 477, citing Apostle Orson Pratt in Remarkable Visions.

<sup>54</sup> The Pearl of Great Price, Moses 6:54.



Primarily, Mormonism believes the death of Christ atoned for the sin of Adam and that our individual sins were not atoned for in the same manner. That is, we must cooperate with God in order to be forgiven for our sins. This calls for individual effort.

'Now that the blessing of redemption from individual sins, while free for all to attain, is nevertheless conditioned on individual effort, is as plainly declared as is the truth of unconditional redemption from the effects of the fall.'<sup>55</sup>

Man must comply with the commandments of God<sup>56</sup> through personal effort in order to be forgiven for personal sins.

The Mormon Church further teaches that man has that within himself which needs only to be awakened and that when this inner something is awakened it provides a basis for progressive salvation. ". . . Salvation [involves] two things, the awakening of the God -- ideal in man, and the progressive evolution of that ideal under the fostering power of grace."<sup>57</sup> (This quotation was in reference to Ephesians 2:8,9.) The Mormon Church has spoken against the view of justification by faith alone. "'The sectarian dogma of

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<sup>55</sup> Jan Karel Van Baalen, The Chaos of Cults (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1946), p. 135, citing comment on Doctrine and Covenants, p. 92 by Talmage.

<sup>56</sup> See The Book of Mormon, I Nephi 22:31.

<sup>57</sup> Nels L. Nelson, Scientific Aspects of Mormonism (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), p. 189.



justification by faith alone has exercised an influence for evil since the early days of Christianity."<sup>58</sup>

Another benefit of salvation is the resurrection.

"Now, verily I say unto you, that through the redemption which is made for you is brought to pass the resurrection from the dead."<sup>59</sup> A description of the two resurrections, as taught by the Mormon Church, is described in the following:

The Nephites believed in two resurrections: the resurrection of the just, called a first resurrection, and a resurrection of the unjust. They believed that those who died before the resurrection of Christ, in ignorance of him, would come forth in the first resurrection.

. . . little children who die, also come forth in the first resurrection.

. . . all who believed in the words of the prophets, or all those who have kept the commandments of God, shall come forth in the first resurrection.

. . . most just men and those who know no law, who live after Christ's resurrection are also included in the first resurrection.<sup>60</sup>

Perhaps the greatest blessing of salvation is the exalted position to which the redeemed shall rise. This benefit is a significant doctrine and the author has considered it wise to quote extensively from Mormon writers and from Mormon scriptures.

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<sup>58</sup> Van Baalen, op. cit., p. 136, citing Talmage from Mediation and Atonement, p. 120.

<sup>59</sup> The Doctrine and Covenants, 88:14.

<sup>60</sup> Sidney B. Sperry, Themes of the Restored Gospel (Utah: Bookcraft Publishing Co., 1950), p. 108, 109, refers to The Doctrine and Covenants, 45:54; 132:19, 26.



. . . They shall be heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. What is it? To inherit the same power, the same glory and the same exaltation, until you arrive at the station of a God, and ascend the throne of eternal power, the same as those who have gone before. What did Jesus do? Why; I do the things I saw my Father do when worlds came rolling into existence. My Father worked out his kingdom with fear and trembling, and I must do the same; and when I get my kingdom, I shall present it to my Father, so that he may obtain kingdom upon kingdom, and it will exalt him in glory. He will then take a higher exaltation, and I will take his place, and thereby become exalted myself. So that Jesus treads in the tracks of his Father, and inherits what God did before; and God is thus glorified and exalted in the salvation and exaltation of all his children. It is plain beyond dispute, and you thus learn some of the first principles of the Gospel, about which so much hath been said.<sup>61</sup>

"They are they who are the church of the Firstborn . . .

Wherefore, as it is written, they are gods, even the sons of God . . ."<sup>62</sup>

The man who passes through this probation, and is faithful, being redeemed from sin by the blood of Christ, through the ordinances of the gospel, and attains to exaltation in the kingdom of God, is not less but greater than the angels, and if you doubt it, read your Bible, for there it is written that the Saints shall 'judge angels', and also they shall 'judge the world.' And why? Because the resurrected, righteous man has progressed beyond the pre-existent or disembodied spirits, and has risen above them, having both spirit and body as Christ has, having gained the victory over death and the grave, and having power over sin and Satan; in fact, having passed from the condition of the angels to that of a God. He possesses keys of power, dominion and glory that the angel does not possess--and cannot possess without gaining them in the same way that he gained them, which will be

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<sup>61</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (fifth edition; Utah: The Deseret News Press, 1938), p. 347, 348.

<sup>62</sup> The Doctrine and Covenants, 76:54, 58.



by passing through the same ordeals and proving equally faithful. It was so ordained when the morning stars sang together, before the foundations of this earth were laid. Man in his pre-existent condition is not perfect, neither is he in the disembodied estate. There is no perfect estate but that of the risen Redeemer, which is God's estate, and no man can become perfect except he become like the Gods. And what are they like? I have shown what Christ is like, and he is like his Father, but I will refer to an undoubted authority to this people, on this point: 'The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit, were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us,' (Doctrine and Covenants 130). There is not time to refer to the many scriptural passages which might be cited in proof of these important facts, enough already have been referred to, to place the matter beyond a doubt.<sup>63</sup>

Benefits of salvation administered through proper authority. All that has been said in this chapter regarding the provision and benefits of salvation are not effective, according to Mormon teaching, unless related to their priesthood. This priesthood was described and its history related in the second chapter.<sup>64</sup> Briefly, the priesthood is composed of two groups, the Aaronic (lesser priesthood) and Melchizedek (greater priesthood). The Melchizedek priesthood must operate before any spiritual blessing may be received.

The Melchizedek Priesthood holds the right of the presidency, and has power and authority over all the

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<sup>63</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine Sermons and Writings, op. cit., p. 18,19, citing I Corinthians 6:3 and Doctrine and Covenants, 130.

<sup>64</sup> See Chapter II, page 17.



offices in the Church. This priesthood holds the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the Church [italics not in original] and gives the privilege of receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, of having the heavens opened, and of enjoying the communion and presence of God the Father and Jesus the Christ. The Aaronic Priesthood has power to administer the outward ordinances of the gospel.<sup>65</sup>

The imperative necessity of the priesthood to salvation is stated by the Doctrine and Covenants:

Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest.

And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.<sup>66</sup>

And again, I say unto you, that whosoever ye shall send in my name, by the voice of your brethren, the Twelve, duly recommended and authorized by you, shall have power to open the door of my kingdom unto any nation whithersoever ye shall send them. . .<sup>67</sup>

Joseph Smith emphatically taught that this priesthood was in existence before the foundation of the world. Therefore, it has always been essential to salvation.

Let me say to this congregation that our heavenly Father performs all his works--the creation of worlds, the redemption of worlds--by the power of the eternal priesthood. And no man on earth, from the days of father Adam to the present time, has ever had power to administer in any of the ordinances of life and salvation only by the

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<sup>65</sup> Sperry, op. cit., p. 49, citing Doctrine and Covenants, 107:14,18,19.

<sup>66</sup> The Doctrine and Covenants, 84:20-22.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 112:21.



power of the Holy Priesthood. You will find this to be the case in the whole history of the prophets of God.<sup>68</sup>

. . . Everything that God has caused to be done for the salvation of man, from the coming of man upon the earth to the redemption of the world, has been and will be by virtue of the everlasting priesthood.<sup>69</sup>

Another approach made by the Mormon Church, in relation to the priesthood, is that the kingdom of God must exist before salvation may be administered. This kingdom of God is constituted where and only where the priesthood is functioning.

Now I will give my testimony. I care not for man. I speak boldly and faithfully and with authority. How is it with the kingdom of God? Where did the kingdom of God begin? Where there is no kingdom of God there is no salvation. What constitutes the kingdom of God? Where there is a prophet, a priest, or a righteous man unto whom God gives His oracles, there is the kingdom of God; and where the oracles of God are not, there the kingdom of God is not.<sup>70</sup>

Conservative Protestantism does not make any claims to the priesthood as described by the Mormon Church. Therefore, according to Mormon belief, Conservative Protestantism could never be instrumental in leading men to Christ.

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<sup>68</sup> Durham, op. cit., p. 68, citing Journal of Discourses, 24:242-3, July 20, 1883.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 64, citing The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star, 51:657 (1889).

<sup>70</sup> Joseph F. Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, op. cit., p. 271, 272.



'Respecting the Melchizedek Priesthood, the sectarian world never professed to have it, consequently they never could save any one and would all be damned together. The sectarian world are going to hell by hundreds, by thousands and by millions.'<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> William Earl La Rue and Alfred Williams Anthony, The Foundations of Mormonism (New York: Ward and Drummon, 1887), p. 45, citing Millennial Star, Vol. 22, p. 54.



## CHAPTER VI

### COMPARISON AND CONTRAST

Several basic doctrines of the Mormon Church have been set forth in the preceding (four) chapters. Though the presentation has been brief, it is sincerely hoped that the reader will be able to ascertain the essential principles upon which this religious system is built. The remainder of this study is devoted to a chapter on comparison and contrast, and a chapter on conclusions. In this chapter the doctrines of Conservative Protestantism are compared and contrasted with the doctrines of Mormonism.

#### I. COMPARISON

Method of procedure. The doctrines of Conservative Protestantism are presented for comparison in the following manner: first, the doctrines of revelation and inspiration; second, the trinity including the doctrines of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit; third, the doctrines of creation and the fall; fourth, the doctrine of salvation.

The doctrines of revelation and inspiration. Revelation may be defined in a broad sense as ". . . every manifestation of God to the consciousness of man, whether through nature and the course of human history, or through the higher



disclosures of the Incarnate Word and the Holy Scriptures."<sup>1</sup>  
 The above definition suggests two formal divisions which will be used in this discussion: first, general revelation which includes nature and events in history; and second, special revelation referring to the redemptive work of God as recorded in the Holy Bible.

The first phase of general revelation is nature. By the use of this term, attention is directed to the disclosures of God through the physical universe apart from man. The Bible maintains that nature reveals God in this manner.

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through<sup>2</sup> all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

Turning to revelation through history, the following statement by H. Orton Wiley provides a descriptive account of God's influence in history.

. . . There is an inner directing presence in history and an authoritative will above it which directs all to an expressed goal, a fullness of time. This goal is the coming of the Word made flesh, the Incarnate Son of God standing out on the plane of human history as God manifested in the flesh. In the light of this historical fact, we are able to look back through the pages of history and recognize purposes in its events; and we are able to

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<sup>1</sup> H. Orton Wiley, Christian Theology (Missouri: Beacon Hill Press, 1949), I, 125.

<sup>2</sup> Psalms 19:1-4. See also, Romans 1:20 and Acts 17:24-27.



read the words of the prophets and see their predictions fulfilled. . . . As the central point of all history, He has had his impress upon it.<sup>3</sup>

Having presented general revelation in its two aspects, the next consideration is that of special revelation. In order to adequately understand special revelation, one must consider the relation of man to God before and after the fall. Prior to the fall the Lord God had been present with sinless man in such a way that they had direct communion one with another.<sup>4</sup> This intimate association was broken by the fall and special revelation became necessary if man was to be rescued from sin, and restored to fellowship and communion with his creator. The Bible is that special revelation and is God's way of disclosing himself and his plan of redemption to man. This revelation provides what man could not understand (of God) through nature and history.

Christ is presented in the Bible as the central figure of revelation. He is the perfect manifestation of God. It should be noted that "he does not so much make a revelation of God [as was done in the Old Testament] as Himself is a revelation of God; . . ."<sup>5</sup> The prophets, priests and kings

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<sup>3</sup> Wiley, op. cit., I, 133.

<sup>4</sup> Genesis 3:8.

<sup>5</sup> James Orr, general editor, The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1947), IV, 2580.



of the Old Testament with their offices and duties are fulfilled in Christ. "In Christ, all the prophets with their lamps, all the priests with their altars and sacrifices, and all their kings with their thrones and scepters, are lost in Him who is Prophet, Priest, and King."<sup>6</sup> Christ is therefore, the perfect and complete revelation of God.

Inspiration. The word inspiration means literally the "breathing of God" or "breathing into" and signifies 'that extra -- ordinary agency of the Holy Spirit upon the mind in consequence of which the person who partakes of it is enabled to embrace and communicate the truth of God without error, infirmity, or defect.'<sup>7</sup> When the Holy Bible was written the Holy Spirit operated upon the hearts and minds of the writers preparing their minds for the reception of truth,<sup>8</sup> and enabling them to communicate this truth without error. Careful reading of the Bible will indicate that personal characteristics of the writer are present. The Bible was not mere dictation, but rather, "the sacred writers were given extraordinary aid without any interference with their personal characteristics. . . ."<sup>9</sup> The character of these writers is

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<sup>6</sup> Wiley, op. cit., I, 137.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., I, 167,168, citing Dr. Hannah.

<sup>8</sup> See II Timothy 3:16.

<sup>9</sup> Wiley, op. cit., I, 176,177.



given in II Peter 1:21. ". . . Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

The position maintained in the Mormon Church is that the Bible is polluted and an inadequate guide to faith and practice. Conservative Protestantism believes in the integrity and genuineness of the Bible. This position is presented by the following observations: Conservative Protestantism believes in the uncorrupted preservation of the Bible. Christ placed his approval upon the Old Testament as it was preserved in his day and there is no evidence that it has been changed except for an omission of an article or the insertion of a marginal note, which in no instance effects the essential teachings. Regarding the New Testament, we have the following statement:

. . . Eminent scholars [Nestle, Tischendorf, Weiss, Westcott, and Hort] have expressed the opinion that there is no doubt that we have the text of the New Testament as it came from the hands of the original writers, in 999 words out of every thousand, and that the one out of every thousand about which there is still doubt, in no instance affects the meaning of any vital doctrine of the Church.<sup>10</sup>

Further, Conservative Protestantism believes in the genuineness (validity of authorship) of the Bible. The authorship of the Old Testament is validated by the approval of

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<sup>10</sup> A. R. Fausset, Bible Cyclopaedia (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1892), p. 203.



Christ.<sup>11</sup> Regarding the New Testament, it may be observed that

. . . we can trace the text back to the second century within a generation of the time when the apostles were living. . . . The fact that at this early date there was no question in the mind of anyone as to the writers of the books themselves, is one of the strongest proofs that the books were written by the men who are said to have written them.<sup>12</sup>

Another important teaching of the Mormon Church, which is contrary to Conservative Protestantism, is that revelation comes only through the priesthood. They claim that the correct interpretation of scripture rests in the hands of this restored priesthood. To present a comparison of Conservative Protestantism to this position, the author finds it necessary to state first the duration of the three distinct laws in the Old Testament, namely; civil, ceremonial, and moral.

The civil portions of the Law belonged to Israel as a nation. Since Christianity was regarded as a religion of universal import, these civil restrictions could not possibly be binding upon the Church . . . for in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28) [*italics in original*]. . . . Likewise, also, the ceremonial rites found their offices in the proper instruction of those who observed them. They admittedly pointed forward to Christ as their perfect fulfilment. Hence St. Paul argues that when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world; but when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might

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<sup>11</sup> See John 7:19; Luke 24:44-45; John 5:39.

<sup>12</sup> Fausset, *op. cit.*, p. 207.



receive the adoption of sons (Gal. 4:3-5). Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster (Gal. 3:24,25) [*italics in original*].

As respects the moral law, Christ did not abolish it, but declared his intention to deepen and vitalize it. And this He did because as such, the moral law is God's will for all men, and not necessarily entangled with the accidents of religious ceremonies or civil obligations. It belongs to the nature of man--is the law of His true being and could not be abrogated without the destruction of human in its higher spiritual aspects.<sup>13</sup>

The next point is in relation to the Melchizedek Priesthood. Conservative Protestantism believes that Christ alone is after the order of Melchizedek, and that this priesthood is not transferable. "'Christ's priesthood, which is after the order of Melchizedek, does 'not pass from one to another' (Hebrews 7:24. . .), for 'He ever liveth', not needing . . . to transmit the priesthood to successors."<sup>14</sup>

Another teaching of the Mormon Church, is that revelation is the rock upon which the church is built. They conclude from this position that continuous revelation is necessary for the existence of the church. Their basis for this belief is found in Matthew 16:13-19. Conservative Protestantism does not believe revelation to be the rock, but rather that Christ is the rock upon whom the church is built. This position is stated in the following exegesis of Matthew 16:13-19:

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<sup>13</sup> Wiley, op. cit., I, 205.

<sup>14</sup> Fausset, op. cit., p. 581.



To understand who is "The Rock" we must go back to Peter's statement "Thou art the Christ". In saying this Peter had in mind

. . . the Fulfiller of all the expectations of the Hebrew people. . . . One who should merge in His own personality the great offices of Priest and King.

. . . . .  
To Peter, then, the Son of man was seen as the Messiah, the Administrator of the will and way of God, as the Son, bearing unique relationship to God, and the living God as the ultimate fact.

It is to that ultimate fact that the definite reference was undoubtedly made, when our Lord said: 'Upon this Rock I will build My Church.'<sup>15</sup>

If we trace the figurative use of the word "Rock" throughout the Hebrew Scripture, we discover that it is always symbolical of God. The Rock therefore is the living God.

The trinity and doctrines of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. To adequately present the true Christian concept of the doctrine of God, one must begin with the trinity. The trinitarian belief immediately sets off the Christian view of God from all others. It is therefore, unique and has no parallel either in the history of religion or philosophy. There have been many groups outside the Hebrew Christian tradition that have posited a personal God, but in these systems there has been either one or many. This problem of one or many gods has been resolved in the trinity which teaches a

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<sup>15</sup> G. Campbell Morgan, Peter and the Church (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1938), pp. 15,16.



monotheism (one God) and also teaches three divine persons within the trinity (which denies plurality of Gods).

Proof for the trinity must come essentially through revelation. The fact that there are three persons within the divine essence and yet there is one God cannot be explained through reason alone. This does not mean that the trinity is irrational, but it does mean that there is a mystery of Godliness which does not have a duplicate in this world. Scripture does teach unity and triunity within the Godhead. In the Old Testament we have references to the unity of God. "I am the first, and I am the last, and beside me there is no God" (Isaiah 44:6). "Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord" (Mark 12:29). In the New Testament we have clear references to the trinity. "Go, ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen" (II Corinthians 13:14).

It is necessary to turn to the New Testament for the most complete disclosure of the Trinity. The reason for this is two-fold. First, it is in the mystery of the incarnation that this truth comes into clear vision. Christ, the second person of the Trinity, unveiled God in a marvelous way through his earthly mission. "For God, who commanded the light to



shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Corinthians 4:6). Christ declared himself to be God co-equal with the Father. The second reason is that the Holy Spirit was not fully manifested as the third person of the Trinity until after Pentecost. In the Old Testament, the Spirit is mentioned in relation to God by such phrases as "his spirit". But Pentecost marks the time when the third person of the trinity comes in his full representation and glory. This completes the revelation of the trinity. Carl Henry made the following statement concerning this revelation of the Father, Son, and Spirit. "As God is not known clearly in His Father-Son identity until the incarnation, so He is not known clearly in His spirit identity until Pentecost."<sup>16</sup>

The relationship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit within the Trinity is important. The terms Father and Son are personal distinctions within the divine nature, and so are the terms Father and the Spirit. The way we most clearly know the relationship within the trinity is through the missions undertaken in the divine economy. The Father sent the Son to provide redemption. The Son sent the Spirit to administer the redemption provided by Christ. These names do

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<sup>16</sup> Henry, op. cit., p. 117.



not refer to a natural relation of father, son but are rather accommodating terms. Likewise the Holy Spirit does not mean that it only is Spirit (all persons of the trinity are spirit) but rather refers to the office of making men holy.

God the Father. To formulate a definition one must establish certain limits; this is the meaning of definition. It may be seen therefore, that the human mind can never define God who is unlimited. Only the infinite can comprehend the infinite. God is represented in the Bible as ". . . dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see. . . ." (I Timothy 6:16). The nearest approach to a definition of God is found in Exodus 3:14: ". . . I AM THAT I AM . . ." This reference asserts His existence without attempting to prove it and further declares that His essence can only be known by Himself.

Evidence on every hand indicates that man has sought God in his darkened sinful condition, but the result has been pagan religion inconsistent and out of harmony with what God really is. Therefore, it is observed that man cannot seek and find God, but rather God must seek and find man. This He has done through special revelation. What we know of God in his essential nature has come through the revealed Word (Bible) and reached its clearest manifestation in Christ.



Turning to a consideration of the nature of God, it should be observed that He is essentially Spirit. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth" (John 4:24; Cf. II Corinthians 3:17). This means that God is not confined to a temporal body. He is not material in any form. He is rather distinct from nature (omnipresent) being its author and governor.

God is also perfect. He is in no sense progressing. He is "a Being or nature of infinite perfection; . . . upon which all things else depend, and by which all things are governed."<sup>17</sup> He is perfect, complete, and free from limit or variability. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

The nature of God may also be viewed as Holy - love. This is the basis of His moral attributes. He is holy, and therefore righteous and just. He is love, and therefore merciful and longsuffering.

Christ. Christ is God, the second person of the trinity. He is co-equal in glory, power, and majesty with the Father. When Christ entered this world through the incarnation and partook of human nature, we witnessed the manifestation of God in the flesh. The nature of His birth is a cardinal doctrine of the Christian faith. If one denies the virgin birth,

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<sup>17</sup> Benjamin Field, Handbook of Christian Theology (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1881), p. 1, citing Bishop Pearson On the Creed, Article 1.



he must deny the God-man, and in turn must deny the effectiveness of the plan of salvation. The Bible teaches that Christ was born of the Virgin Mary. He had no earthly father. Rather, he was conceived by the Holy Spirit. ". . . that which is conceived in her [Christ] is of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 1:20). "And the angel answered and said unto her, 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" (Luke 1:35).

The distinction should be made that Christ has two natures and one person. These two natures are divided as follows: first, human nature; and second, divine nature.

The manhood of Christ was in every respect like ours except he was born free from depravity. ". . . Our Lord's human nature was assumed under conditions which properly belong to man, and underwent a process of development in common with other men, sin only excepted."<sup>18</sup> Scripture teaches that Christ had a human body (John 12:27; Matthew 11:29) and a soul (Matthew 26:38; Luke 10:21).

Also, Christ had a divine nature, he was deity. As God he claimed for himself divine attributes (John 8:58; Matthew 28:20; 11:27; 18:20). He also claimed the power to

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<sup>18</sup> Wiley, op. cit., II, 175.



forgive sins (Matthew 9:2-6; Mark 2:5-12). This provided a great stumbling block to the Jews for in claiming to forgive sins he was assuming a prerogative of God. Christ also accepted worship (Matthew 14:32), and claimed to be the final judge of all men (Matthew 7:21-23). One outstanding credential used by Christ as proof of his deity was the performance of miracles.

Though Christ had two natures, he had but one person. He was not a mixture of two personalities. The incarnation was a union of a divine person with human nature and not with a human person. Perhaps this union can be more clearly understood by comparing it with the person and nature of man. "In man, one person subsists in two natures -- one immaterial or spiritual, the other material or physical. In Christ . . . the one person subsisted in two natures -- the divine and the human; . . ."<sup>19</sup>

The assumption of human nature by Christ was a permanent condensation. He will possess his glorified body throughout eternity.

Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the trinity. He is co-equal and co-eternal with God the Father and Christ. "The name of God, His attributes, His works and

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., II, 183.



His worship are all applied to the Holy Spirit."<sup>20</sup> The Holy Spirit is a person just as the Father and the Son, and has all the attributes of the Father and Son, including omnipresence.

As was suggested in the study of the trinity, there has been a progressive revelation of the Holy Spirit to the church, which revelation was made full at Pentecost. The Holy Spirit

. . . could not come as the administrator of Christ's atoning work until His earthly ministry was completed. Hence the Holy Spirit could not be fully revealed until after the death, resurrection and glorification of Christ.<sup>21</sup>

While the full dispensation of the Holy Spirit did not begin until Pentecost, the Spirit Himself, as the third person was operative from the beginning both in creation and providence. Also, the Holy Spirit has functioned in the capacity of revealing the will of God to man. We also have evidence in the Old Testament of persons being clothed with the Spirit, especially to accomplish important tasks,

The offices of the Holy Spirit are twofold. He is the gift of God and the giver of gifts. "He is the gift of the glorified Christ to the church, and abides within it as a creating and energizing presence."<sup>22</sup> As the gift, He provides

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., I, 405.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., II, 303.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., II, 315.



the fruits of the Spirit in the Christian's life (Galatians 5:22,23). This is in reference to character. As the giver of gifts, he provides endowments for special vocations (I Corinthians 12:8-10). In conclusion, it may be said that the "Holy Spirit is now the agent of both the Father and the Son, in whom they hold residence (John 14:23), and through whom men have access to God."<sup>23</sup>

The doctrines of creation and the fall. Creation is the work of almighty God who has within himself all the powers essential to speaking worlds into existence. It was not necessary that God create for he is perfect and complete in Himself. Creation was a free act which took nothing from his essential nature and added nothing to it.

The purpose for creation may be seen first in that it reveals the glory, beauty, and orderliness of God. Also, creation expresses God's desire for fellowship with a created being. The perfect fellowship of the trinity, bound in love, desired to express this intimate relation with a moral being. This essentially was the purpose for creating man.

Before proceeding to the acts of creation, care should be taken to note that matter, in whatever form it might assume, is not eternal. The Old and New Testament nowhere

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., II, 316.



admits of this pagan materialistic concept. The word bara used in Genesis 1:1 has the meaning to create out of non-existence. (This is the most highly favored use of the term among Hebrew scholars). The Mormon Church teaches that there has been an eternal progression of God and matter (through being reformed by God). This belief must conclude that there is no original cause. But this

. . . hypothesis involves a manifest contradiction; inasmuch as, while each being or existence in the series is supposed to be caused by that which proceeded it, the whole series together is caused by nothing . . . [this is only] going back with the difficulty. It offers no explanation of original existence.<sup>24</sup>

Against the pagan materialistic concept of Mormonism, the Christian position is that God is the first cause. He is underived, independent, and the cause of all creation.

The acts of creation were affected by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That is to say all these were present and active. "While creation originates in the love of God and is made effective by the divine will, the Scriptures specifically state that in this work both the Son and the Spirit are associated with the father."<sup>25</sup> Hence, we read in I Corinthians 8:6 that "to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom

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<sup>24</sup> Field, op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>25</sup> Wiley, op. cit., I, 446.



are all things, and we by him." The Scriptures also record that the Spirit moved upon the waters (Genesis 1:2), that is, "brooded over the waters in the sense of bringing order and beauty out of chaos."<sup>26</sup>

The acts of creation are recorded in Genesis 1. There are three specific levels, namely, material substance (Genesis 1:1), animal life (Genesis 1:21), and spirit or personality (Genesis 1:27). Each time these three levels of creation are mentioned the Hebrew word bara occurs.<sup>27</sup> Other places in Genesis one the words yestar and asah appear and is translated make. In none of these instances, where the word bara occurs, is an attempt made at proof that God created, it is merely a stated fact. The proof rests upon the nature of God and faith. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, . . ." (Hebrews 11:3).

Man is the crowning creation of God. The earth was adapted to meet his needs. Herein we see that the garden of Eden as the most perfect environment for man. The account of man's creation is recorded in Genesis 1:27 and 2:7. The first reference is anticipatory and the second is actual.

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<sup>26</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., I, 458,459, citing Adam Clark as follows: "The rabbins, who are the legitimate judges in a case of verbal criticism of their own language, are unanimous in asserting that the word bara [*italics in original*] expresses commencement of the existence of a thing."



Man is created both material and immaterial or body and spirit. The immaterial may be considered in its Godward and manward aspects as spirit and soul.<sup>28</sup> These aspects are inseparable. The image of God in man includes the rational and moral. The rational image makes man different from the lower animal creation. This rationality may be divided into spirituality, knowledge, and immortality. Spirituality is the deepest fact in the likeness of man to God.<sup>29</sup> Knowledge is man's ability to think and commune with God.<sup>30</sup> Immortality was the state of created man both materially and spiritually.

The moral image is seen in the fact that man was created holy. This holiness was dependent upon the intimate presence of the Holy Spirit. It could not become ethical until man had proven himself faithful. All creatures other than man reflect God's perfection, but to man is added "His image".

Fall. When man was created and placed in the garden he was put on probation. By probation is meant a proving or testing period. This testing time was for the purpose of providing man with the opportunity of choosing to obey his

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<sup>28</sup> See I Corinthians 5:3; 6:20; Psalms 42:6; I Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 4:12.

<sup>29</sup> See Hebrews 12:9; Acts 17:27.

<sup>30</sup> See Colossians 3:10.



creator. Should this choice be made man would become ethically holy and would enjoy walking in the pure light of God's presence, without broken fellowship. Being placed on probation, however, made possible a choice which would result in disobedience and immediate separation from God. It must be clearly established that when Adam and Eve were placed in the garden they had sufficient will to continue in holiness, but no so much as to make a lapse into sin impossible. Their environment was the very best for they had perfect physical conditions.

The occasion of the temptation was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This tree when placed in the garden represented "man's constant dependence upon God." Also the "tree of life was intended as an emblem of that life which man should ever live, provided he continued in obedience to his maker."<sup>31</sup> The very name of this tree is significant. The phrase good and evil refers to the fact that "'man . . . ought to know evil only as a possibility that he has overcome."<sup>32</sup> The fruit of this tree was prohibited, not because it was wrong to eat fruit but that God had commanded them not to. To disobey, meant open rebellion to the known will of God. The fact should be stated here that the placing of the

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<sup>31</sup> Wiley, op. cit., II, 55.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., II, 56.



tree in the garden was a blessing for it provided a constant reminder against wrong choices.

The agent used in the temptation was Satan, a fallen angel, who had rebelled against God in heaven. It is important to observe that the essential nature of Satan's disobedience centered around the unholy desire of becoming like God.

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: . . . I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like to most High [italics not in original] <sup>33</sup>

Essentially this same temptation was presented to Adam and Eve for Satan promised that they would become like gods should they disobey. Here then is the core of sin, rebellion against God, setting up oneself as adequate authority to rule all of life. When Satan tempted Adam and Eve he presented God's good gifts in a false light. Temptation became therefore, an attempt to satisfy a legitimate desire outside the realm of legitimacy. The place of Adam and Eve in the fall was essentially the same, that of disobedience. "The woman being beguiled fell into transgression: And when Adam yielded to the enticement of Eve, he only proved that he had already consented to her act; he also fell into transgression [italics

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<sup>33</sup> Isaiah 14:12-14.



in original]. His sin was disobedience<sup>34</sup> though he was not beguiled.

Special attention should be directed to the fact that though God permitted the fall, he did not will it. God's very nature (holy-love) speaks out against sin. In its smallest form and in its most secret place it is condemned to severity. There is not one single verse in the Bible that sanctions sin. On the contrary, everywhere sin is exposed for what it really is -- enmity against God.

The awfulness of sin may be seen in the result it incurred. First, man lost the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, who was the organizing principle of life, there could be no harmonious order in man's total makeup. Man went from an organized perfect creation to chaos. Second, there arose the birth of an evil conscience and shame. One moment after Adam and Eve sinned, they would have given anything to recall their act. They ran and hid from the holy presence of God, where before they had had sweet fellowship. Third, the absence of the Holy Spirit and the birth of an evil conscience is evidence that man's nature became depraved. (This depravity was extensive [throughout].) Adam acting as the federal head of the entire human family became the first possessor and

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<sup>34</sup> William Burt Pope, A Compendium of Christian Theology (second edition; New York: Phillips & Hunt for vols. I & II [n. d.] and London: Wesleyan Conference Office for vol. II, 1880), II, 15.



transmitter of this depraved nature. In Genesis 5:3 Adam begat children in his own likeness after this image. This image was a depraved nature as is evident in the fact that the world became so corrupt that it repented God that he had made man. Fourth, man's intelligence became darkened. Before the fall Adam had named the animals and evidently had a high state of intelligence, but with the fall came a darkened and dulled intelligence. There were physical effects to the fall also which cause misery and pain to both sexes of the human race.

Salvation. Salvation is the universal redemptive work of Christ. It is the one way provided by God whereby fallen humanity may be restored to fellowship with its creator. In this presentation the subject of salvation shall be divided into three areas, namely, sin and its consequences; Christ and his work; benefits of the atonement.

To properly evaluate the redemptive work of Christ one must understand the origin and nature of sin. As previously noted, sin commenced (in the human family) in Adam. As the first man, Adam was both the natural and federal or representative head of the human race. As the representative head, Adam involved all his posterity in the fall resulting in the inheritance of a depraved nature.



The nature of the penalty issuing from sin was twofold. First, there was physical, spiritual, and eternal death in relation to man. Second, natural order was cursed. The purpose for this penalty was to vindicate the justice of God which was a display of mercy in relation to justice.

Christ and His work. Christ is represented as the last Adam. This was true because he lived a perfect life free from sin as Adam did before the fall. Having lived a perfect life as man and being God, Christ stood in the place where he could mediate a plan of reconciliation between God and man. The supreme motive for Christ's redemptive work was love. Humanity did not deserve this act of mercy for the Bible relates that ". . . God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

The nature of the redemptive work of Christ is divided into two parts. These two-fold aspects may be defined by using the words, propitiation and reconciliation. By propitiation is meant, that God and man are brought near. In propitiation the divine nature of God (holy-love) was satisfied. Christ the God-man became the substitute for the human race. This vicarious death expressed God's love for holiness and His hatred for sin. Propitiation is grounded in God's nature.

Reconciliation defines the finished work of Christ ". . . having effected and exhibited the restoration of



fellowship between God and man."<sup>35</sup> Reconciliation therefore, is grounded in a God-man relationship. The relationship between propitiation and reconciliation may be stated as follows:

God lays aside His displeasure against mankind, being propitiated in the intervention of His son; and all men, through the ministry of reconciliation, are invited to enter into a state of acceptance with God, laying aside their enmity. The former belongs to the work of Christ as a decree of heaven fulfilled on earth; the latter belongs to the same work as finished on earth and pleaded in heaven, in the provision made for individual acceptance.<sup>36</sup>

Christ made the reconciliation of the human race to God an actual fact; however, certain conditions must be met to make it a reality in individual lives. These conditions are conviction, repentance, prayer, and faith. Conviction includes a sense of lostness and deserved condemnation, and a vision of love and mercy. Repentance involves Godly sorrow, self humbling, confession, surrender, forsaking of sin, and restitution. Prayer is the means whereby one requests forgiveness and seeks salvation. Faith in its essential nature is forsaking all other help and trusting Jesus through his word. Faith involves a mental ascent and simple trust, both of which are necessary. One important fact about salvation in relation to faith, is that we are not saved through works. No amount

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., II, 282.

<sup>36</sup> Loc. cit.



of good works will merit our salvation. It took the precious shed blood of Jesus to do this. The proper relation of faith to works is presented in Ephesians 2:8,9. Here we see that we are saved by faith alone unto good works. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works . . . ."

Benefits of atonement. The benefits of the atonement may be classified under the headings; extent, benefits, and conditions. The extent of the atonement is two-fold, namely, universal provision, and individual application conditioned by faith and obedience. The unconditional benefits are: extended existence and probation of man; restoration of all to a saveable state; restoration of the Holy Spirit to the race in a quickening and awakening measure; gracious ability given to man to cooperate with God in salvation; ultimate triumph over Satan and his powers of evil; curse upon nature to be born away. The conditional benefits are: initial salvation including justification, regeneration, initial sanctification (personal corruption cleansed), adoption, witness of the spirit; full salvation, including cleansing from inherited corruption, and a complete indwelling of the Holy Spirit; preservation unto glorification (growth in holiness); and resurrection unto a glorified state.



A statement must be made regarding the place of baptism in salvation. Essentially it is a sign and seal of the covenant of grace. As a sign it represents the fact that spiritual purification has taken place. The seal represents the faithfulness of God to fulfill his covenant. Its administration should follow only after clear evidence that the initial work of salvation has been wrought in the life.<sup>37</sup>

Also, mention should be made that the plan of redemption is applicable to the individual only in this life, for after death comes the judgment. It has not been the purpose of this study to prove the Conservative Protestants' position, and therefore, the Scriptures in the Bible used by the Mormon Church to prove a second chance will not be challenged except to mention that a careful study of the context where these Scriptures are found will show that unwarranted forced conclusions are derived.

## II. CONTRAST

Method of procedure. The doctrines of Mormonism and Conservative Protestantism have been presented. It now remains to contrast these two positions. For brevity and clarity, the author has chosen to chart the contrast. Brief statements of doctrinal positions will be listed in order as

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<sup>37</sup> Acts 8:12.



they have been presented in this study. If further information is desired to help clarify any point, one may refer to the presentation given in the preceeding chapters.

MORMONISM	CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANTISM
Revelation - Inspiration	Revelation - Inspiration
<p><u>Revelation</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revelation must be continuous because it is the uncovering of new truth.</li> <li>2. Revelation is the foundation of the church.</li> <li>3. Continuous revelation is necessary to salvation.</li> <li>4. Rejection of continuous revelation means damnation.</li> <li>5. Revelation is received (for the Mormon Church) through the Melchizedek Priesthood.</li> <li>6. The keys of authority are necessary in order to administer salvation.</li> <li>7. Individual members of the Mormon Church may receive personal revelations.</li> <li>8. <u>The Book of Mormon, Pearl of Great Price, and Doctrine and Covenants</u> are the word of God.</li> </ol>	<p><u>Revelation</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Christ is the complete revelation (of God). He is truth.</li> <li>2. Christ is the foundation of the church.</li> <li>3. Salvation is by the finished work of Christ.</li> <li>4. Rejection of Christ means damnation.</li> <li>5. Revelation is recorded in the Bible where Holy men of God were inspired to write. Christ's mediatorial office was after the order of Melchizedek.</li> <li>6. Whosoever will may come.</li> <li>7. Christians may receive illumination of God's written word.</li> <li>8. The Bible alone gives to us God's objective revelation.</li> </ol>



MORMONISM	CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANTISM
<p>9. The Bible is fallible and an inadequate guide to faith and practice.</p>	<p>9. The Bible is infallible and an adequate guide to faith and practice.</p>
<p><u>Inspiration</u></p> <p>1. It is a divine impression wrought by the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p><u>Inspiration</u></p> <p>1. Holy men spoke without error as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.</p>
<p>Trinity - God, Christ and Holy Spirit</p>	<p>Trinity - God, Christ, and Holy Spirit</p>
<p><u>Trinity</u></p> <p>1. There are three separate Gods.</p> <p>2. There is unity in purpose, power, and attributes between these three separate Gods.</p> <p>3. The trinity is uniquely pagan.</p> <p>4. There is no proof of the Trinity.</p>	<p><u>Trinity</u></p> <p>1. One God. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God.</p> <p>2. One God subsists in three co-equal persons.</p> <p>3. The trinity is uniquely Christian.</p> <p>4. The doctrine of the Triune God is revealed in Scripture.</p>
<p><u>God</u></p> <p>1. God is material.</p> <p>2. God and man different only in degree.</p> <p>3. God has parts and body.</p>	<p><u>God</u></p> <p>1. God is immaterial.</p> <p>2. God and man different in degree and kind.</p> <p>3. God as spirit (immaterial) does not have parts and body.</p>



MORMONISM	CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANTISM
<p>4. God is imperfect.</p> <p>5. God is becoming.</p> <p>6. God was once man.</p> <p>7. God is not omnipresent.</p> <p><u>Christ</u></p> <p>1. Christ is literally begotten from God.</p> <p>2. Christ is material.</p> <p>3. Christ was humanely conceived.</p> <p>4. Christ was not born of a virgin. (Adam was Christ's natural father).</p> <p>5. Christ was a polygamist.</p> <p><u>Holy Spirit</u></p> <p>1. The Holy Spirit is a personage of spirit.</p> <p>2. The Holy Spirit is Divine Fluid.</p> <p>3. Every atom is a part of the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>4. God is absolute perfection.</p> <p>5. God is.</p> <p>6. God is immutable (unchanging).</p> <p>7. God is omnipresent.</p> <p><u>Christ</u></p> <p>1. Christ is co-eternal with God.</p> <p>2. Christ is material and immaterial. He is a perfect blending of Deity and human nature.</p> <p>3. Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>4. Christ was born of the Virgin Mary.</p> <p>5. Christ lived a celibate life.</p> <p><u>Holy Spirit</u></p> <p>1. The Holy Spirit is a Person.</p> <p>2. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth.</p> <p>3. The Holy Spirit is distinct from all matter.</p>



MORMONISM	CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANTISM
4. The Holy Spirit alone is omnipresent.	4. Each person of the God-head is equal in all attributes.
Creation and the Fall	Creation and the Fall
<u>Creation</u>	<u>Creation</u>
1. Matter is eternal.	1. Matter is created, therefore not eternal.
2. God formed the world from existent matter.	2. God created the world ex nihilo (from nothing).
3. All men pre-existed as spirit beings.	3. No member of the human race pre-existed except Christ who is God.
4. All men were begotten in the spirit world.	4. Man was created by God.
5. Man was made in the material image of God (body and parts).	5. Man was created in the image and likeness of God (spiritual and moral).
6. The purpose for creation is to exalt man who may become a God.	6. Man can never become a God.
7. Man was created for eternal marriage and procreation beyond this life.	7. Marriage is for this life only, there will be no procreation in the next life.
<u>Fall</u>	<u>Fall</u>
1. Satan is the younger brother of Christ, the natural offspring of God.	1. Satan is a created being, an angel.



MORMONISM	CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANTISM
2. God planned and purposed the fall.	2. God permitted the fall, but did not plan or purpose it.
3. Satan was used of God to initiate the fall.	3. Satan's rebellion issued in sin. This was not God's will.
4. The greatest commandment given to Adam and Eve was to multiply and replenish the earth.	4. The greatest commandment was to obey God.
5. Adam wisely followed Eve in sinning in order to fulfill God's desires.	5. Adam wilfully disobeyed God. This did not fulfill God's desires.
6. The fall was a blessing because man became mortal and could propagate the race.	6. God created Adam and Eve to propagate the race. This power was not the result of the fall.
7. The fall was a blessing because man came to a knowledge of good through sin.	7. Adam and Eve knew good without experiencing sin.
8. The fall was a blessing because man could be exalted to the position of a God.	8. Man was never intended to be a God.
9. The fall was a blessing because our intelligence was enlightened through knowledge of sin.	9. Sin (through the fall) darkened intelligence.
10. The fall was a blessing because man exercised his free will.	10. Adam could have exercised his free will and not sinned.
11. The fall issued in depravity of body, not spirit.	11. Fall issued in depravity of spirit.



MORMONISM	CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANTISM
Salvation	Salvation
<u>Atonement</u> 1. God planned the fall and atonement. 2. Christ's death was a vicarious sacrifice.	<u>Atonement</u> 1. God planned the atonement because of the fall. 2. Christ's death was a vicarious sacrifice.
<u>Faith and Repentance</u> 1. Faith is essential to repentance. 2. Faith is trust in Christ. 3. Faith plus works appropriates salvation. 4. Repentance is essential to salvation.	<u>Faith and Repentance</u> 1. Faith is essential to repentance. 2. Faith is trust in Christ as the God-man. 3. Faith alone appropriates salvation. 4. Repentance is essential to salvation.
<u>Baptism</u> 1. Baptism is essential to salvation. 2. Sins are actually forgiven in act of baptism. 3. Immersion is the only accepted mode.	<u>Baptism</u> 1. Baptism is an ordinance to be administered after regeneration. 2. Sins are forgiven only through faith in Christ. 3. Difference of opinion within Conservative Protestantism.



MORMONISM	CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANTISM
<p><u>Receiving the Holy Spirit</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Holy Spirit is received by the laying on of hands.</li> <li>2. The Holy Spirit is a present comforter.</li> <li>3. The Holy Spirit provides gifts for the church.</li> </ol>	<p><u>Receiving the Holy Spirit</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Holy Spirit is received by faith.</li> <li>2. The Holy Spirit is a present comforter.</li> <li>3. The Holy Spirit provides gifts for the church.</li> </ol>
<p><u>Provision for the dead</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is constant preaching in the spirit world.</li> <li>2. Mormons are being baptized for the dead by proxy.</li> </ol>	<p><u>Provision for the dead</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. After death comes the judgment, and eternal punishment for the wicked.</li> <li>2. Baptism for the dead is not a New Testament doctrine.</li> </ol>
<p><u>Results of Salvation</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Christ's death automatically provided for Adam's sin.</li> <li>2. Individual sins must be worked out.</li> <li>3. Salvation is an awakening of Divinity within.</li> <li>4. There will be a bodily resurrection.</li> <li>5. Man is exalted to become a God.</li> <li>6. The dead will have an opportunity to receive Christ.</li> </ol>	<p><u>Results of Salvation</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Christ's death made available complete redemption.</li> <li>2. Individual sins are forgiven through the cleansing blood.</li> <li>3. Salvation is the quickening of the spiritual nature.</li> <li>4. There will be a bodily resurrection.</li> <li>5. Redeemed humanity shall be glorified.</li> <li>6. After death, there will be the judgment and eternal punishment for the wicked.</li> </ol>



MORMONISM	CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANTISM
<p data-bbox="284 449 594 483"><u>Proper authority</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="154 512 724 575">1. A distinct priesthood operates in the Mormon Church.</li><li data-bbox="154 606 724 701">2. The Melchizedek Priesthood was restored to Church under Joseph Smith.</li><li data-bbox="154 732 724 795">3. There is no salvation outside the Mormon Church.</li></ol>	<p data-bbox="878 449 1188 483"><u>Proper authority</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="751 512 1224 575">1. There is a universal priesthood of believers.</li><li data-bbox="751 606 1321 669">2. Christ alone is after the order of Melchizedek.</li><li data-bbox="751 732 1273 827">3. Salvation is universal. It is based on faith and obedience.</li></ol>



## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION

The author of this study firmly believes that to disregard the Bible as the infallible Word of God will inevitably lead into pathways of error. The study of the Mormon Church, with its open repudiation of the Bible as the inerrant Word, has confirmed this belief. Nowhere may one find a religious movement which has embraced so many antichristian views while claiming to be the only true body of Christendom.

The Mormon Church claims to have restored many precious parts of the Bible. Its argument for these supposed restored truths is based primarily upon silence. Where the Bible has little or nothing to say the Mormon Church has taken liberty to develop large systems of thought. The doctrine of baptism for the dead is a good example. Mormonism teaches that baptism for the dead was administered in the wilderness tabernacle, and that Solomon's temple was a later scene for these baptisms. Where are the facts to prove this dogmatic assertion? They are not to be found in the Old Testament or in secular history. The Mormon Church answers that the Bible has been so corrupted that this teaching has been erased from religious and secular literature.

Another important doctrine of the Mormon Church based primarily upon silence is the Melchizedek Priesthood. The



elaborate history of this priesthood, handed down from generation to generation, is nowhere to be found in the Bible. How strange that God did not in at least one place clearly state that this priesthood was after the order of man. Instead, the Bible is very clear in teaching that Christ alone is after the order of Melchizedek.

No one can claim to be Christian who posits a finite progressing God (who was once man). It is evident that the Mormon writers (in making God finite) have endeavored to read into God what they have seen in man. The logical result has issued in a materialistic concept of God.

In many of its teachings, the Mormon Church reveals the fact that it has attempted to force into the Christian system those teachings it desires. A classic example is the belief in polygamy. Desiring to establish this view, Mormon writers claim that Christ was a polygamist. The conclusion follows that if the Son of God practiced polygamy it would certainly be right for his followers to do likewise.

Because of the false assumptions upon which this church is founded, the system has necessarily become a complicated bundle of error. For example, the fall, as taught by the Mormon Church, was planned of God. This teaching issued in the belief that God was obligated to redeem man. This was further developed by the doctrine of a second chance. God has to give every possible opportunity for repentance because



he became liable to man through the fall. This and other examples might be given as proof that a departure from God's objective Word, the Holy Bible, issues in gross error.

This study has been presented with the sincere hope that many might be profited in guarding against the Mormon heresy. Many laymen are seeking the truth about this movement and it is the duty of the minister to see that they obtain the facts. This author firmly believes that if coupled with a knowledge of Mormonism the Conservative Protestants are well versed in Bible truth and have a clear understanding of the source and trustworthiness of the Bible, they will be prepared to assume the offensive when faced by Mormon Missionaries. This author has found that a positive personal testimony is the most effective weapon one can use against the cult of Mormonism. This is true because the Mormon Church teaches that one can never know he is saved while in this life. How different this is from the testimony of the Apostle Paul, ". . . I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> II Timothy 1:12.



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