

# Navigating Revelation

Prophets, Open Cannon, Restoration



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## Introduction: “Gathering Together All Things in One in Christ”

“This is good doctrine. It tastes good. I can taste the principles of eternal life, and so can you. They are given to me by the revelations of Jesus Christ; and I know that when I tell you these words of eternal life as they are given to me, you taste them, and I know that you believe them. You say honey is sweet, and so do I. I can also taste the spirit of eternal life. I know it is good; and when I tell you of these things which are given me by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, you are bound to receive them as sweet, and rejoice more and more.” – Joseph Smith, TPJS 355 (cf. 2 Ne. 31-33) [https://emp.byui.edu/ANDERSONR/itc/Book%20 of Mormon/03 2nep hi/2nephi31/2nephi31\\_07gooddoctrine .js.htm](https://emp.byui.edu/ANDERSONR/itc/Book%20of%20Mormon/03_2nephi/2nephi31/2nephi31_07gooddoctrine.js.htm)

Finally! A good taste in our mouths for religion!

We are living in a day foretold by prophets of old, and can expect more direction than cliché church answers to life’s questions from the Catholic and Protestant churches. The restored Church of Jesus Christ is vastly different than any other church, so to you dissatisfied with religion in general, so are we, give this a try.

Because Jesus Christ restored his Church to Joseph Smith in 1820, we are now living in “The dispensation of the fullness of times” (D&C 128:18,20; 112:30-31; 138:48; 124:41; 121:31; 27:13 Eph. 1:10; ) wherein things are to be revealed which have been kept hidden from the foundation of the earth. If you think the restored Church of Jesus Christ has merely the same run of the mill talking points to offer humanity as other contemporary Christian groups, this letter will show you that such is not the case, and that Mormonism has a more holistic answer to life’s questions, and a more glorious hope for the future of mankind, including more compassion and joy than is traditionally allowed among “Christian” groups for those who believe differently: non-Mormons and non-Christians alike. These things offer not only a brighter future, but a more peaceful present (See D&C 59:23; Moses 6;59).

The Devil is launching a powerful and relentless attack against us, more so than ever before. Though many physical dangers and hardships of life have subsided, the spiritual ones have increased 100-fold. I believe God’s counter attack in this war of words and opinions is in declaring truth more clearly and powerfully than ever before. When

the Devil stands up to fight against God with his powerful weaponry, **GOD WILL FIGHT BACK, and WIN EVERY TIME.**

Because Jesus Christ the Son of God restored his Church to Joseph Smith in 1820, we are now living in “The dispensation of the fullness of times” (D&C 128:18,20; 112:30-31; 138:48; 124:41; 121:31; 27:13 Eph. 1:10; ) wherein things are to be revealed which have been kept hidden from the foundation of the earth. If you think Mormonism has merely the same run of the mill talking points to offer humanity as other contemporary Christian groups, or just more clever thinking, this letter will show you that such is not the case, and that Mormonism has a more holistic answer to life’s questions, and a more glorious hope for the future of mankind, including more compassion and joy than is traditionally allowed among “Christian” groups for those who believe differently. It is a faith of angels, prophets, visions, and God speaking anew from the heavens to the earth as a whole in these our times, to reveal afresh the doctrine of Christ. These things offer not only a brighter future, but a more peaceful present. (See D&C 59:23; Moses 6:59)”

What the current leaders of the Church declare overrides speculations of past statements. Interpreting doctrine is to be kept within the bounds the Lord has set. The Standard Works and words of the living First Presidency and Quorum of the 12 Apostles are what constitute church doctrine. Living Apostles help interpret the Standard Works lest any of us “look beyond the mark”. Apostasy can be found in both far left and far right ideologies, as well as in between. I denounce any group which actively seeks to change church doctrine or policies.

I witness that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the one true Church of Jesus Christ in these latter days. Other churches contribute to God’s work, but the “LDS Church” is the only organization vested with the authority of God to lead the work of salvation in these the latter and last days. Only those authorized to preach the gospel represent the church, and I am not so authorized. When dealing with religious topics, focuses on the teachings of the prophets both ancient and modern.

I feel to say like Joseph Smith once did, “if my life is of no value to my friends, it is of none to myself”. Foremost I am your friend, and if disagreements are between us, let us refocus on the overall goodness of humanity, and allow friendship to overcome disagreement, for God’s sake. We want safety for all persons, and we want all to believe and worship as they wish in peace.

Now a few notes of some basic tenants of the restoration of the fullness of the gospel:

- The Church of God has been on earth from time to time.
  - The Church of God is always lead by a prophet. (Amos 3:7)
  - The Church of God is taken from the earth at times because of unrighteousness. (Amos 8)
  - The Church of God is to come to stay in the last days (Daniel). The restored church of Jesus Christ of latter-day saints today claims to be that very church, and I witness is.
  - Joseph Smith was the first leader of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Since his death God has continued to call people to lead the Church.
  - God the Father and Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph Smith to call him as prophet and leader in the Church.
  - Church leaders clarify doctrines of salvation.
  - Power to seal in heaven things that are sealed on earth (like marriages) were restored to the earth via the Church.
  - The Church has the fullness of the Gospel (all we need to know and do to be saved) and can be found in the Book of Mormon.
  - The Book of Mormon points us to modern prophets for further guidance.
  - The Book of Mormon's key goal is to testify of the resurrected living Savior, Jesus Christ.
  - Baptism is legal only in the organization that God has given legal power to complete that ordinance. We claim this to be that organization. (D&C 1, D&C 22)
- further references on this to come, for now see [mormon.org/restoration](http://mormon.org/restoration) or [mormon.org/joseph-simth](http://mormon.org/joseph-simth) or [mormon.org/book-of-mormon](http://mormon.org/book-of-mormon)

“For those with eyes to see and ears to hear, it is clear that the Father and the Son are giving away the secrets of the universe!” -Elder Neal A. Maxwell

“One of the things the Spirit has repeatedly impressed upon my mind...is how willing the Lord is to reveal His mind and will.” - President Russel M Nelson

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.” – Proverbs 29:18

“Wherefore, we search the prophets, and we have many revelations and the spirit of prophecy; and having all these witnesses we obtain a hope, and our faith becometh unshaken, insomuch that we truly

can command in the name of Jesus and the very trees obey us, or the mountains, or the waves of the sea.” – Jacob 4:6

“Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.” – Mark 12:30

“Occasionally, I am asked by Church members why we do not have mighty miracles today like those that occurred in the early days of the Restoration. My answer always is the same: We do!” - David A Bednar (<https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/elder-bednar-temple-miracles-covid-19>)

I was recently asked if the Book of Mormon was the thing that made the Holy Bible complete in our religion. I answered that no, the key is living prophets to guide today, and without those, not even the Holy Bible and the Book of Mormon will get you where you need to go (people can always creatively manipulate texts to support their agenda, but not so with living oracles!).

# ON REVELATION

## Prayers & Answers

-After President Kimball became President of the church he said, “I thought I knew how to pray before, but now I am really learning how to pray.” (“Spencer W. Kimball: A True Disciple of Jesus Christ” by Elder Marvin J Ashton, Gen. Conf. April 1985)

-“Bless our enemies. Help us to understand them, and them to understand us.” This was an oft repeated phrase in President Kimball’s prayers. (“Spencer W. Kimball: A True Disciple of Jesus Christ” by Elder Marvin J Ashton, Gen. Conf. April 1985)

-When I was at the Missionary Training Center (MTC) in Provo Utah, Elder Jeffrey R Holland of the Quorum of the 12 Apostles came to speak to us. He was asked how we get the spirit. He gave 3 councils: 1. Search the scriptures. Search them long and deep. 2. Pray. Pray like you’re banging down the doors to heaven, begging, pleading to be heard, desperately. 3. Once you have the spirit, try to not lose the spirit by offending Him with bad choices.

-An excerpt from my essays “Magnifying Your Calling in the Church & Your Calling in the Gospel” and ” Top 3 Types of Crazy to Look for In Dating “ ...when your spouse comes to you and says something like “I feel prompted to do the following thing which is in the parameters of the teachings of the prophets...” you must be open to that. As your spouse approaches you with this type of an idea, you pray about it yourself for confirmation of the idea, wherein you’ll get one of the following answers:

### Answers:

1. “it doesn’t matter”
2. “not good”
4. “you decide, it’ll be fun for all of us to see where this goes”
5. “hm... you might not be ready for this... ask later. And in the meantime, READ THOSE SCRIPTURES! PS I love you & I’m proud of you!”

6. "I respect you and your wishes. Do it if you wish, much good can come of it, but know that it's not strictly required of you"

7. "Try 7" (God can give us specific answers! He isn't limited to yes or no questions!)

DISCLAIMER: Though God certainly has a sense of humor, prayer isn't this casual.

## Highlights from President Russel M Nelson

### Devotional 2.27.22

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/broadcasts/watch/california-member-devotional/2022/02?lang=eng>

Missionaries were encouraged to use tech before the lockdowns it proved very helpful during the lockdowns

#### **SISTER NELSON REMARKS:**

He is thorough in prayer

He tells people at home randomly: have I adequately expressed how much I love you today?

When returning home from work he sings "I'm home" he then sits and chats with his wife and expresses joy to be home.

When his wife suggests an idea he approves even before he knows what the idea is because he knows she will have thought it through before asking

He says he is on call 24-7 with the Lord

When the Lord inspired him of a change to make he does so right away. What better time than now he says.

And thinking the Lord and prayer for good experiences he said now help us to put those in our memory banks so we can focus on what we need to do now and move forward

He says like President Woodruff the Lord showed me exactly what to do or Lord should be exactly how to proceed or the Lord told me exactly what would happen if we took this other course

He wants recently told his wife I wish I could tell you the decision we made today It will be thrilling she said when will I know he said in about 50 years

#### **PRESIDENT NELSON REMARKS:**

Israel is the most illustrious lineage. It is the blessing to those who in the pre-earth life pursued the talent of spirituality.

## Don't Look Beyond the Mark: Overemphasizing Administrative Comments

When we go around parading that we must do every little thing a leader says to the T, that we need to be a yes man in every respect, this is dangerous. It is on the path to dependence and spiritual weakness.

Don't criticize the church, but don't feel a need to do bazar things. You know what's right.

When there's some administrative policy, we don't have to obsess about that. Our job is to treasure up the doctrines of Christ. Prophets point to Christ, that's their role. They reveal doctrines of the kingdom of God, and point out benefits for the temporal salvation of the saints. But this doesn't mean that the saints can't get additional revelations about how to act, and what to believe. It's a plain fact repeatedly taught by the prophets that there are higher ways and we are to seek and live and believe in those higher ways where possible. The issue with most people is they make excuses about why they don't need to do much. If you're in the opposite camp that's doing many good things, anxiously engaged of your own free will in a good cause (a really good one, not just a prosperity crusade), then you're probably going to be getting messages from the spirit of the Lord to guide you to higher and higher ground. In fact, you can count on it.

## Joseph Smith Knew MUCH More Than He Was Allowed To Teach

Joseph Smith said he knew much more than he taught, and could have taught MUCH more than he did, but was held back due to the unrighteousness of the saints.

-Joseph Smith: “It is my meditation all the day, and more than my meat and drink, to know how I shall make the Saints of God comprehend the visions that roll like an overflowing surge before my mind. Oh! How I would delight to bring before you things which you never thought of!” (Joseph Smith, JS Hist vol D-1, 16 April 1843, 1556, The Joseph Smith Papers)

-Joseph Smith: “I could explain a hundred fold more than I ever have, of the glories of the Kingdoms manifested to me in the vision, were I permitted, and were the people prepared to receive it, the Lord deals with this people as a tender parent with a child, communicating light and intelligence and the knowledge of his ways, as they can hear it.” (Joseph Smith, JS Hist vol D-1, 16 April 1843, 1556, The Joseph Smith Papers)

-Joseph Smith: “Brother Brigham, if I was to reveal to this people what the Lord has revealed to me, there is not a man or woman would stay with me.” (Joseph Smith; JD vol 9, discourse given May 25 1862, Brigham Young “Endless Variety of Organizations – Blessings that Await the Faithful”) p209

-Wilford Woodruff: “The fact is, there are a great many things taught in the building up of this kingdom which seem strange to us, being contrary to our traditions, and are calculated to try men. Brother Joseph used a great many methods of testing the integrity of men; and he taught a great many things which, in consequence of tradition, required prayer, faith, and a testimony from the Lord, before they could be believed by many of the Saints. His mind was opened by the visions of the Almighty, and the Lord taught him many things by vision and revelation that were never taught publicly in his days; for the people could not bear the flood of intelligence which God poured into his mind.” (Wilford Woodruff, “Necessity of Adhering to the Priesthood in Preference to Science and Art” JD vol. 5 April 9, 1857

-Brigham Young: “In the due time of the Lord, the Saints and the world will be privileged with the revelations that are due to them. They now have many more than they are worthy of, for they do not observe them. The Gentile nations have had more of the revelations of God than is their just due. And I will say, as I have before said, if guilt before my God and my brethren rests upon me in the

least, it is in this one thing – that I have revealed too much concerning God and his kingdom, and the designs of our Father in heaven. If my skirts are stained in the least with wrong, it is because I have been too free in telling what God is, how he lives, the nature of his Providences and designs in creating the world, in bringing forth the human family on the earth, his designs concerning them, &c. If I had, like Paul, said – “But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant,” perhaps it would have been better for the people.” (BY, “Privileges of the Sabbath – Duty of Living Our Religion – Human Longevity, &c,” in JD vol.8:58)

## Brigham Teaches to Avoid Revelation from Foul Spirits

-Brigham taught that “if the people did not receive the spirit of revelation that God had sent for the salvation of the world, they would receive false spirits, and would have revelation...enough to damn the whole nation” (BY Words of Wisdom – Spiritualism, JD vol. 13 (London, 1871), 280-281. Discourse given on October 30, 1870)

-Brigham spoke of the spiritualists who receive revelations from “every foul spirit that has departed this life” which “float around here” which are “seeking whom they can destroy; for they are the servants of the devil, and they are permitted to come now to reveal to the people.” (BY Words of Wisdom – Spiritualism, JD vol. 13 (London, 1871), 280-281. Discourse given on October 30, 1870)

-Brigham taught “God has spoken now, and so has the devil; Jesus has revealed his priesthood, so has the devil revealed his” He said the one is perfect organization, the other is confusion, and that “everybody [is] receiving revelation to suit himself.” (BY Words of Wisdom – Spiritualism, JD vol. 13 (London, 1871), 280-281. Discourse given on October 30, 1870)

## Meaning of Sustaining: Not Blind Obeisance

One shared this idea of sustaining as supporting, not following blindly:

The term "sustain" has been distorted. I think that in the Church we somehow use that term as in "agreeing" or "obeying" the leaders but the word "sustain" actually means to supply or nourish.

When we raise our right hand to sustain our leaders, we aren't saying that we agree with or will obey everything they say, but we are simply acknowledging that we are willing to support or to supply them.

## The Ongoing Restoration: What it Means

Diane Robertson shared this insight, “About continuing restoration, we need to look up the word restoration. It means to restore. If it is being used to take away or change things that Joseph Smith already restored then that is not restoration, it's the opposite. So sure, the restoration is suppose to continue until we have all of the covenants and ordinances that Abraham had or Adam or Enoch, etc and Zion is established and Christ comes again. That is what Joseph Smith attempted to do in his day. Since that didn't happen then, and since Joseph Smith prophesied that it would, we can expect more to restored and all the Joseph Smith said would happen, will happen. But it should be more and it should be the covenants of the father, not less, and it certainly shouldn't embrace the sins that God destroyed other civilizations over (see Leviticus 20). Notice in the 2nd Lecture of Faith how the whole thing is about the priesthood as given to Adam. That is restoration. We need what Adam was given in order to be brought back into the presence of the Lord.”

## Planted: Belief and Belonging in an age of Doubt, by Patrick Mason – Book Introduction

Planted is written for members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Particularly, it's for long time members who have questions about church doctrine and teachings, or otherwise struggle with faith in Jesus Christ and his kingdom on earth, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Mason is a brilliant man, and the book is quite enjoyable if you have or know someone who has religious doubts, in or out of the LDS church, and even when it comes to believing in God in general.

Mason gives a non-dogmatic approach to his subject, and is very respectful of current social issues.

The book treats hard topics like race, feminism, agnosticism, apostasy, atheism, church history, the role of prophets, and others.

Mason points out which issues are important and which are just side shows. When reading his book, one thinks about technical issues, as well as issues of charity which are most important.

For specific detail on main difficult subjects, he points the reader to the official LDS "Gospel Topics Essays" which have been released by the First Presidency of the Church which give official facts about these important and trying issues. They can be found by [clicking here](#) or at this link <https://www.lds.org/topics/essays?lang=eng>. There are about 15 of these essays.

## The Crucible of Doubt by Terryl & Fiona Givens – Book Highlights

As these highlights are somewhat extensive, I share them with permission of the author. These notes are paraphrasing according to my recollection understanding and preferences, and do not give a balanced representation of the authors' views.

Though I do not agree with some of the liberal views of the Givens, I did find some great resources in this text.

- there is nothing so painful as suspense said Joseph Smith.
- we want a roadmap but find we have only a compass
- Levi Savage had the choice between security and wisdom, or loyalty. He chose loyalty and suffered much. He told them that since they had chosen to go, he would go with them, and if need be, die with them.
- Faith is more of a cross than a big electric blanket.
- Elder Holland said we today unfortunately just want Gods who don't ask much of us.
- Brigham Young: The gospel causes things to come up in us that would otherwise have gone unnoticed, it brings up the lurking traits that would have otherwise remained there.
- Adam and Eve only know what paradise is when they lose it.
- Childhood is most valued and loved by those who have left it behind.
  
- Voltaire: to believe in God is impossible, but to not believe is absurd.
  
- To whom else shall we go? Christ's doctrines are troubling and difficult, but it's reality.
  
- Do we abandon our shutters because we can't see the entire mountain? That's what abandoning faith is like when we don't have all the answers. We know more than we think even though we know less than we would like.
- not all the prophets say is doctrine. D&C says what they say when moved upon by the Holy Ghost is Gods word. So, the work of being in tune with the HG is our job to figure it out. That is hard. We make false

cheat sheets like infallibility of prophets to make us not have to work out answers on hard topics. This is like a golden calf that is a god which doesn't ask much of us.

-some church leaders were asked if they're always sure the man they pick for stake president is the Lord's man. They said no, but once we've selected him, he becomes the Lord's man. God truly gives us power and authority: what we do he sustains, even though we aren't always in tune with the spirit and aren't always making the right choices. Like Pharaoh taking off his ring and putting it on the finger of Joseph in Egypt, telling that people would obey him as though obeying pharaoh.

-Elder Oaks: I teach general principles. Whether an exception applies to you, you must work that out between you and the Lord.

-philosophy is what you must do until you figure out the right questions to ask

-the fall of Adam wasn't a black and white, right and wrong, fine line choice, and it wasn't the great sin which made life forever terrible. The tree was put there to make opposition, not to create shade. Christ said he came to bring not peace but a sword. Many who heard him went away saying this is an hard saying who can hear it, even disciples went away. A few remained saying 'where else would we go for the words of eternal life?' We have to be willing to have conflict and trials and opposition. In Eden and elsewhere, he gave them a puzzle it was like a Rubik's Cube he said figure this out and that's how it is life is filled with trouble hardness difficulty perplexing puzzling situations good better and best and we have to figure it out and that's the school of the gods that is the school of the Gods and we are gods and so if you're intimidated to talk to someone about the gospel because it might hurt their feelings and they Departed when Jesus was teaching

– Sunday worship centers on the atonement of Jesus Christ and the sacrament and the teaching mediocre or overbearing talks or so forth can be the presenters equivalent of the Widow's Mite and it can be a blessing to them is giving what they have their capacity have given so we should not judge are Sunday's based on what we're getting out of it of what people are giving us worship is about giving like when the three wise men came to see Jesus They Came To Worship Him they brought him expensive gifts it was about giving themselves so coming to church and putting up with each other when we blunder sometimes which is like bearing each other's burdens; church is essentially reenacting on our small scale the sacrifice of Christ it's us showing our willingness to be

like him in every way. A church community is also like a family that we don't just run away from but that we go through problems with and resolve things with since we live by each other. (\*This is another reason I don't want to move a lot, I want my children to learn to deal with this place instead of running from place to place to avoid the inevitable conflict that rises when living in close association with others for an extended period)

– Joseph Smith taught that only those who persist in rejecting truth will remain in hell. All the rest will be lifted out of hell. This is one of the most liberal views on salvation ever taught.

-Joseph Smith said that the restoration of the church was that it was coming forth “out of the wilderness”. In the book of revelation, it says the dragon chased the woman into the wilderness where it hid for a time. This was like the apostasy. The Catholic church held onto the doctrine that the living and the dead have lots to do with each other. The doctrine of purgatory is like our doctrine of the spirit world. The church came out of the wilderness. It didn't disappear entirely, God still blessed people and revealed things to people, just the ordinances and priesthood authority were gone. Yes, we have more than them, and what we have is essential, and all will eventually hear it. But what they have is still important. God didn't take a nap for 1600 years, he was always reaching out to those who would listen. Like Elijah hiding in the cave. Like wandering Mormon.

-D&C 49:8 8 “Wherefore, I will that all men shall repent, for all are under sin, except those which I have reserved unto myself, holy men that ye know not of.” These holy men may well have been the reformers and good people of the dark ages, who didn't enjoy formal church organization authority and doctrine, but who tried to uphold the teachings of the scriptures in public and in private.

-JST Rev. 12:4-5, 7:

“4 And there appeared another sign in heaven; and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman which was delivered, ready to devour her child after it was born.

5 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore years.

7 And the dragon prevailed not against Michael, neither the child, nor the woman which was the church of God, who had been delivered of her pains, and brought forth the kingdom of our God and his Christ.”

This suggests that the church wasn't entirely extinguished, that though the authority and ordinances needed for salvation were gone, good people who loved the scriptures were still blessed. Consider the inspiring poetry, art, and music God spoke to them through, which still speaks to us. Its unwise to tell others that the restored church has a monopoly on truth.

-The church is a portal for the saved, not a reservoir of the righteous.

- love in our world is suffering love. some do not suffer much because they do not love much.

-one philosopher points out that a key issue with many Christian churches today is their inefficiency, the lack of ability to organize themselves to effectively take care of each other and the poor. This is a mighty strength of the restored church.

-President David O McKay had memorized 1000 poems. President Spencer Kimball read lots of classic literature. We must explore everything we can. The school of the prophets was instructed to study many topics.

One prophet cited in the text, I believe it was Kimball, said that the great authors were like miniature prophets.

-Bishop Wooley when offended by Brigham Young, and Young asked Wooley if he was going to apostatize, answered – this is as much my church as it is your church, why would i leave my own church? (Wooley did well in taking ownership)

-Satan wants us to be overcome by the sorrow of evil. same pre-mortally: he sacred people away by showing scenes of inevitable war, mass infanticide, innocent suffering, etc., so they forget about the end results of the plan of salvation

-one taught another to pray by going in private, and yelling at God for an hour about injustice in and suffering of the world, and wept bitterly, which turned into sobs, which turned into quiet prayer

-mourn with those that mourn is being open to the suffering of everyone. to be in agony over humanity's agony. to be open to the wounds of the world.

-none can see the face of god and live can mean none can bear to see his sorrow.

-Brigham Young said to live as a saint but not enjoy the spirit of it is one of the hardest trials mankind can endure. it means many do good yet suffer.

-To remember is one of the highest forms of worship.

## Deficiency of the Bible as Solo Compass & the Executive Officer Metaphor - A Response to a Friend

Here is treated a few items of disputation among Christians, and the resolution thereto as authoritatively and decisively declared by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the only true and living church on the face of the earth:

On account of deleting the word of God, removing theosis (that we can become Gods) from Christianity, “most Christians say the bible says you can’t become like God.” Or better yet, “The bible obviously says you can’t become like God” (since there is no private interpretation and anyone in their right mind should agree with them!)

Well, that actually is a private interpretation. Indeed the author of the bible meant it to say one thing and one thing alone, but that one thing seems to not be very popular.

I declare that God has appeared in 1820 to Joseph Smith to call him as an authorized prophet and again reestablish the true non-private interpretation of the bible.

...Like CS Lewis put it; it wasn’t just that Jesus made the world lighter, it’s that all things were seen new via the light he shined on me.

... thus you see the need for a church, so that the rules are defined, and people can’t have “their own personal Jesus”, but that they answer to “THE Jesus” the real one, and there is only 1 Jesus (1 Lord 1 faith 1 baptism it says). Without an organization that represents Jesus, people can get the wrong idea about WHO Jesus is and WHAT he expects of them (and yes, I think that the bible isn’t enough, so many people read the bible and profess to adhere to it 100%, yet they all have many different interpretations about how we can/should live.).

If I’m not mistaken your religion emphasizes a confessing of Jesus as being the bar for getting into heaven. While this idea is in the scripture, the LDS believe that confessing Jesus also means conforming to his laws. And lest people be confused about his laws, Jesus has a church on earth, his organization for teaching what those laws are (again the bible is insufficient in this regard, look at the many churches disagreeing).

Let me give an example:  
a man writes a book.

100 people come and start companies saying, “hey come live by the book!” but the companies all have their own way of doing it. Then the author of the book shows up and says “what’s going on here? You guys are perverting what was supposed to be clear and uniting. From here on out, I will declare in person what I meant by my book. The book is still critical, but in case of dispute, I’m here, come ask me. When I have to be away on business, you can come talk to this person, whom I myself have declared as my representative. I will communicate with him, I trust him to do this, and will strike him down if he ever goes astray in passing on exactly what I tell him.”

thus the truth is kept alive and honored the way the author meant it to be. I give you this slightly more elaborate response to teach you, not to say that salvation comes from all these things. LDS believe Jesus Christ is the source of all blessings we receive. LDS believe that we are saved only through Christ. But when you get into “who” is Christ and “what” does he expect of us, that is where the church comes in handy.

## Increased Accountability and Expectation of the Latter-day Saints: Extra-Biblical Scripture & Exaltation (Theosis) - Response to a Friend Christian Friend

Firstly, we the Latter-day Saints believe we have more truth. Since truth is power, the old adage applies “with great power comes great responsibility”

For instance, you are a Christian. Since you know about the motivating love of God, and the need to avoid hell, and the need to follow the teachings of Jesus, I can expect you to do more in that regard than I could expect from a heathen who never learned about why those things are important.

For example, a Christian teaching is “thou shalt not commit adultery”; so if a heathen commits adultery, he could be “expressing himself”, but if a Christian does it, he is damned to hell (however, there is conscience (the latter-day saints have a name for conscience, ‘the light of Christ’) which everyone has, which warns against evil, so depending on how steeped a society is in sin, even the non-religious person is accountable before God for his acts, as his conscience warned him against the evil, and urged him toward the good, and he quenched that spirit/conscience.)

one of the fundamentals of LDS and I think overall Christianity is that if you have more knowledge about true laws, you are held more accountable for obeying them.

Like how we expect a child to not walk in the road because they know it’s bad, but if an infant crawls into the road we treat it differently, it didn’t know any better.

Every religion which claims to be “the true” religion, could in some form claim that they are expected to do more since they have more truth.

For example, the Pharisees placed emphasis on outward observance of the law. Jesus came and told them a higher truth, to not only love one another, but to love one another as he loved them.

Another metaphor is that when a person is contracted to do a high paying job, they are often required to do more than the people that are being paid less. In LDS temples, we make contracts with God to not only be saved in heaven to live with God and Christ forever, but contracts which

set us up to become like God and Christ forever. (Some say “ah Lucifer wanted to be like God, so he got thrust out of heaven and is a devil”; no, he was thrust out for rebellion. To become a God you have to do it in Gods way. Also, Lucifer wanted to not have anyone to answer to, but that is not the way of the universe. Everyone has someone to answer to. Christ answers to Father, Father answers to his father, etc. Lucifer wanted to subvert the entire eternal system and ‘be a law unto himself’. This could not be. Further, Lucifer wanted to be a God without putting in the work to get there, he wanted to overthrow Father instead of following the ways of Father. For more on this topic, see Elder Christofferson’s address in 2017, a BYU Devotional titled “A Message at Christmas”. I have notes on it and a link to it under the title of “The Need for a Savior: God’s Plan of Justice vs Lucifer’s Tyranny”.

This doctrine of theosis was in the Christian church for several centuries after Christ among the Christian Fathers, until opinions of men rooted it out, and it’s not in most Christian churches to this day;

or if this appeals to you more I’ll put it this way, deleting the word churches (that seems to be popular), “most Christians say the bible says you can’t become like God.” Or better yet, “The bible obviously says you can’t become like God” (since there is no private interpretation and anyone in their right mind should agree with them!)

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## Ancient Rod of Aaron Used in Our Day by Oliver Cowdry

D&C 8:6-9 “Now this is not all thy gift” to Oliver Cowdry, referring to the rod he used to get revelation.

Joseph Smith Papers: original D&C 8 (then known as the Book of Commandments, 1833 edition): speaks of the “gift of Aaron” which Oliver Cowdry has as being a “rod of nature” and “sprout”. See <http://josephsmithpapers.org/paperSummary/revelation-april-1829-b-dc-8?p=2>

Heber C Kimball had a rod for revelation: Bro Kimball showed me a rod that the Lord through the prophet Joseph had given to him. He said that when he wanted to find out anything that was his right to know, all he had to do was to kneel down with the rod in his hand, and that sometimes the Lord would answer his questions before he had to time to ask him.

5 Friday 1844 inquired by the rod of the Lord if my family was well (Heber C. Kimball Journal [1844-1845])

Thursday prayer meeting in the afternoon with the Twelve, went home and used the Rod; I got a witness Elder W Richards would live, that we would overcome our enemies (H.C. Kimball Journal 5 September 1844) I went up to the capital in DC. I see men and their wives walking out two by two. O that I had my dear Vilate with me. Bless her heart and soul and body... I called on the name of the Lord he heard me for my heart was made comfortable. I inquired by the rod it was said my wife would come to me in the East, and that Congress would not do anything for us. I do not care whether they do or not. It is none of theirs to give. My Father in heaven owns it all and he will give it to so let them go their own place, good night. I must go to bed. (Heber C Kimball “Journal“ Church Historical Department; Ms/f/50,51; spelling updated)

God has used physical objects as instruments of revelation to testify of Christ. Modern and ancient examples, including Aaron’s ancient rod which Oliver Cowdry used. Truman G Madsen suggested that the reason the Book of Mormon characters had to carry the gold plates around in the desert with them in their travels is because without it we forget. He referenced President George Albert Smith in saying that without memorials, we forget things. This could also be why Joseph

Smith recovered the gold plates to translate rather than merely getting it by revelation from God the whole time.

“It should be recognized that such tools as the Urim and Thummim, the Liahona, seer stones, and other articles have been used appropriately in biblical, Book of Mormon, and modern times by those who have the gift and authority to obtain revelation from God in connection with their use. At the same time, scriptural accounts and personal experience show that unauthorized though perhaps well-meaning persons have made inappropriate use of tangible objects while seeking or claiming to receive spiritual guidance. Those who define folk magic to include any use of tangible objects to aid in obtaining spiritual guidance confound the real with the counterfeit. They mislead themselves and their readers.” (Dallin H. Oaks, “Recent Events Involving Church History and Forged Documents,” *Ensign* (October 1987), 63.)

“Some people have balked at this claim of physical instruments used in the divine translation process, but such aids to facilitate the communication of God’s power and inspiration are consistent with accounts in scripture. In addition to the Urim and Thummim, the Bible mentions other physical instruments used to access God’s power: the rod of Aaron, a brass serpent, holy anointing oils, the Ark of the Covenant, and even dirt from the ground mixed with saliva to heal the eyes of a blind man.” (“Book of Mormon Translation,” *Gospel Topics on LDS.org* (2013).)

Consulted:

[http://en.fairmormon.org/Doctrine\\_and\\_Covenants/Oliver\\_Cowdery\\_and\\_the\\_rod\\_of\\_nature](http://en.fairmormon.org/Doctrine_and_Covenants/Oliver_Cowdery_and_the_rod_of_nature)

More rod studies: Num. 17:8; Ex. 7:9-12

## Rebuttal to a Closed Canon: It's Open! God's Words Never Cease

Response to Article about closed canon of scripture "The Canon of Scripture (Wayne Grudem)" from <https://www.biblicaltraining.org/library/canon-scripture-wayne-grudem> as well as a few other questions about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and their doctrine.

See also other compilations of mine on the subject: Continuing Revelation from God at

<https://richardsonstudies.wordpress.com/category/continuing-revelation-from-god/> ; and see The Only True Church at

<https://richardsonstudies.wordpress.com/category/the-only-true-church/> -saying the sticks in Ezek. 37 is a mere analogy is your opinion, it's doesn't say that such is merely an analogy. Nothing says it couldn't be books, the text even seems to say that. If you don't agree, so be it. I think no less of you. As for minimizing God and what he does, I know he is blessing Israel and gathering them, and I praise him daily for that. Let's not accuse each other of doubting God's majesty and blessings just because we both interpret a passage differently.

-you say the only possible explanation for 3 God's being one is the trinity. It is POSSIBLE that the word one is to be translated in the way the passage about a man leaving his mother and father and they being one flesh. Certainly the husband and wife aren't to morph into one body! That's just unnatural. In fact, there are 2 ways to write the word "one" in Greek and Hebrew, one of them means one thing, the other way means being united in purpose and desire. The latter way is what is used in the passage about the man leaving father and mother to be one with his wife. The latter is also the one used when speaking of father son and HG. Another example on this point: Jesus wanted his Apostles to become one with him as he and his father are one. Did he want them to morph together into one entity? Osbert!

Another example: What did Jesus mean when he said not mine, but thy will be done?

What did Jesus mean when he said I go to my God and to your God?

These are only a few of a plethora of examples showing that indeed, it's quite possible for them to be separate people.

-grace alone isn't expressed by the writer of the book of James, just to use one example (many protestant biblical scholars say book of James doesn't belong in the bible for this reason). Also, Paul speaks of getting your calling and election made sure, pressing toward that mark, and lists requirements of that which include righteous behaviors. He said not even he had reached it yet at the time of writing that. 2 pet. 1:10 says give diligence to make your calling and election sure. cf. 2 Pet. 1:4-9 for a list of things one must do. Also see Philip 3:8-10, 12-14 'press toward the mark'. also see Philip 2:12.

Hence what of the passages saying that not my works but by faith we are saved? works to Paul mean the law of Moses, i.e. circumcision. This won't save you, the new law of Christ is here. Faith to Paul must include good works, else why would he say he was pressing toward the prize, etc.? Also Jesus says in the parable of the sheep on the right and goats on the left, that the reason for that separation was those on the right did charitable deeds. Also he says, 'well done', this means they had to do something. Like the good Samaritan parable. Or the parable of the talents. or when the rich prince said what for salvation he wouldn't sell all and follow Christ, although he recognized Jesus as Lord and kept the ten commandments, he didn't pass his Abraham-like trial of giving his all, and hence we have no record of that man getting the blessings of Abraham. In summary, it is by Christ alone that we can be saved, but it's not to say that the traditional scenario of "get saved then shoot people and get to go to heaven" is reasonable. In other words, I think this is a misunderstanding; you and I both believe that Christ saves us, and we both believe that we can't be involved in gross sins and still make it to heaven.

-as for offending you in guessing responses, I'm merely using the arguments that most protestants give me. I've had this conversation many times. I don't mean to offend you and will let you answer for yourself in the future.

-I will look at Wayne Grudem and try to get my hands on "From God to Us" by Norman Geisler. Also "New Evidence that Demands a Verdict" by Josh McDowell. I'm open to reading about both sides of the story, which I have been doing for quite some time now.

-indeed, the bible is quite accurate. But to say it's impossible for it to have been meddled with is problematic, since it can't be proven that it

was not meddled with. The fact stands that although we have manuscripts, no one claims to have the exact ones written by the Apostles themselves. Many passages beg a more correct translation, like the 2 ways Judas Iscariot died, or the passage of Satan forcing Jesus onto a mountaintop, or the passage of God repenting that he created people when he saw the evil of Noah's day (God never repents he is perfect). Or when Jesus says "I never knew you" in one of the parables speaking of an evil person. I believe Jesus knows everyone, evil or no. The JST renders this "You never knew me." There are other examples.

-as for personal interpretation, if it's possible to know the correct meaning of the bible by merely studying the entire text of the bible. why isn't the entire Christian world, whom claim the entire bible text as their source of doctrine, flocking to one set of beliefs rather than making splinter groups based on their own interpretations of what they sincerely believe the bible says?

-as for the other sheep I have which are not of this fold, he doesn't ever say who those other sheep are, so we can't claim one way or the other. But you can speculate that it's the Gentiles, and I can speculate that it's Americans. I believe Jesus Christ has come out and said that indeed, it's the American's. I have this belief based on the book of Mormon which I hold as sacred like the bible.

-you say 66 of them are reliable, but others disagree with you. Who is correct? The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has an official position on the matter because a modern prophet received a revelation from Jesus Christ on the matter, but as for all else, how do they know? How does your church/fellow believers and all of the other churches/groups of belief make these kind of decisions? By vote?

-why did Nephi kill Laban? As for Laban being sufficiently warned, the BFM says that there were many prophets like Jeremiah and Lehi and others whom the people were rejecting. They even tried to kill Lehi it says. Exo. 21:12-14 entirely excuses the behavior of Nephi killing Laban; a defense attorney or Priest in the days in which they took place under the law of Moses would have CLEARLY justified Nephi in what he did. Read the text carefully, you will see Laban had 3-4 offenses against Nephi, the law of Moses condemned him to death and this was in Jerusalem at 600BC, they lived the law of Moses!

One of God's prophets, Lehi, was commanded to get those plates. Laban stood in the way of the will of God, and was eliminated. Is this so strange?

-as for Creatio ex nihilo, I can quote you several bible scholars (non-Mormon scholars) saying it's not a biblical doctrine. One issue of this doctrine is that since God created everything, he must have created evil, and hence he is responsible for our suffering. On the other hand, if evil is simply something that has always been around, God is not responsible for it- it's merely something we have to fight through to reach the status that God has already reached. Naturally we need help of Christ to do this. -Same with the trinity, the scholars say this doctrine evolved from Greek influence rather than Apostolic text. I have those quotes too (from non-Mormon scholars). Nowhere in the bible does it come out and say, 'god created everything out of nothing'. Also the following passages suggest the contrary: Heb 12:9, prov. 8:22-31, acts 17:26, Heb 11:3 (Jesus the word is pre-mortal and created earth cf. Heb 1), john 1:1, 3, 14; 1 Pet 1:20, Isa 14:12, rev 12:7-9, rev 12:4, Heb. 1:6, job 38:4, 7; the word was made flesh must mean that the word (Jesus Christ) existed before his mortal birth.

-do you believe with many protestants that the majority of the human race are going to hell forever because of not hearing about Jesus Christ during their lives?

-do you believe with many protestants death bed repentance?

-where do you say spirits go between death and the resurrection?

-as for the link you sent me by Wayne Grudem on Canon of Scripture: indeed this is not something to truffle with. Indeed, man should not add to the scriptures, only as he is writing the word of God. God indeed authorizes adding to the word of God by his prophets. As for scripture attesting to something being scripture, the BFM and D&C say they are true. Indeed, the first 5 books of the bible don't always speak of more writings to come. Neither did Moses say a guy named Paul etc. would come along to add to the scriptures, but they did, and God and God sanctioned it. This is an eternal principal. Who are we to tell God to not allow more to be written? Indeed the phrase quoted "until there should come a prophet to tell what to do with them". I don't rely on scholars to tell me what is and is not scripture, not even Josephus, I rely on prophets commissioned of God. I don't rely on the bible alone for doctrine, but from living prophets. Amos 3:7 God always uses prophets. What Jerome and Josephus and Eusebius say are nice, but not authorized by God himself. That is the point of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: God has authorized people in this day by the laying on of hands from Peter James John and John the Baptist to have authority to be

modern day Apostles who officiate officially for the Church and regulate its affairs in order to maintain unity there in see Heb. 5:4 and Thes. about unity in the faith and the perfecting of the Saints. Scholars are helpful but not authoritative. It's quite possible for scholars to be incorrect, Jesus calls and ordains people to lead his Church, he doesn't leave the administrations and regulations thereof to scholars or not even well-meaning individuals. One may argue that it's hard to believe that Joseph Smith said what he says he saw (God Jesus angels and being ordained by them etc), but it's also hard to believe that Jesus Christ atoned for my sins. Nevertheless, by the power of the Holy Ghost, I can know all truth: the truth that Jesus Christ atoned for my sins, as well as the truth that Joseph Smith was a true prophet and was called of God to re-establish the only true Church of Jesus Christ on the earth in these latter-days, indeed, one Lord, one faith, one baptism. Indeed, the times of refreshing sent from the presence of the Lord. Indeed, the "falling away first" preceding the Second Coming of Christ (as enumerated in the New Testament that it must come) has occurred, and not the glorious restoration of the fullness of the gospel has come. Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints whom have learned this glorious truth go all around the world, preaching to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, bringing them into the fold of Christ. We love everyone, and call ever person who believes in Christ a brother/sister. We invite everyone to bring what truths they have and come receive more, building on the foundation of Christ. The Protestant Reformation was nice, but it never claimed to have the true church restored, it only claimed that the true church had fallen away, and they were trying to find the truth, teaching each other from the bible, looking for truth. Many Protestant reformers never intended to start their own church, but to merely be awaiting the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ, the organization sanctioned of God with his authority. Many Protestants today believe that whoever wants to has the Priesthood and authority to officiate in the Church of Christ, but that would lead to chaos, all contending for their own ways. It wasn't my idea to start a church and call it the only true church- no, but the Holy Ghost revealed to me that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true and I cannot deny it any more than I would deny that Jesus Christ is the Only Begotten Son of God, come to redeem the world from sin, the key figure in all history of humankind, the intergalactic Redeemer prepared from the foundation of the earth. Indeed, in the latter

days, the Lord is pouring his spirit out upon handmaidens etc., lowly people like myself, blessing them with revelation pertaining to eternal truth. I am not called to receive revelation for the Church policy, but I am entitled to receive revelation or myself and things pertaining to my eternal salvation as well as that of my family which I preside over. This document says that the apocrypha are what caused the Catholic Church to say that salvation requires something from us as well as Christ, but I have shown earlier in this letter that the New Testament itself is very supportive of this.

Your document says, "Protestants have held that the church cannot make something to be Scripture, but can only recognize what God has already caused to be written as his own words". This is all well except for the fact that God can speak to each generation, and such can be recorded by a prophet. Isn't that the way he has operated for the past thousands of years? There was an apostasy, when the world at large rejected the prophets, and there were no prophets for about 1700 years, but then in 1820 beginning with Joseph Smith, the restoration of the Church has come, and prophets are being accepted in our day. The preaching to this generation by those prophets is being recorded in sacred text, just as sacred as any text ever was.

The analogy of a policeman only accepting real currency was used. Indeed, but who are the policemen in the world today? The prophets called of God by the laying on of hands in a direct line of authority in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Who creates the legal tender? The same. In ancient days, so it was with them. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is not a reformation of the Catholic Church, it is a restoration of the ancient Church as seen to be operating in the bible, New and Old Testament.

The article says, "Christians today should have no worry that anything needed has been left out or that anything that is not God's words has been included."; But who gave the author of this article authority to declare that? It doesn't say that in the bible, if that's what he is thinking. We have the new testament because people were going astray, and they needed more prophets to guide them. Who would argue that the world today is not going astray? If any time ever needed prophets among them, it would be our day. The earth today is as wicked as the days of Noah, and is about to be baptized by fire, like it was baptized by water in the days of Noah. Wouldn't God, in his great mercy, send living witnesses of Christ to our day? People who have seen him and can witness that he

lives! People who can help the people of the Lord prepare for the return of Jesus Christ in the glory of the clouds at his mighty Second Coming-yes, we should have a modern-day leader who can speak with God face to face as was the case with Moses Peter etc. The “falling away” has occurred, now Israel is being restored, is being gathered to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We love people who don’t join with us, but are nevertheless firm in our convictions, the Holy Ghost having revealed to us the truthfulness of this doctrine.

Your article says, “apostles who are given the ability from the Holy Spirit to recall accurately the words and deeds of Jesus and to interpret them rightly for subsequent generations.” I ask, if they gave the right interpretation for all subsequent generations, why is there dispute today between Christian churches as to which doctrine is correct? Surely, we need more instruction. There are many ways to interpret the bible. Let God tell us how to do it, not man! God will continue working in the same way he always has, by authorized representatives, called and ordained by him, by the laying on of hands by his servants. Joseph Smith was ordained to the Apostleship in the Priesthood by resurrected beings, Peter James and John. Joseph Smith has spoken with Jesus Christ personally face to face on many occasions. The authority and line of communication Joseph Smith held with God have been passed down to the current Prophet Thomas S Monson and the current Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. They speak every April and October in General Conferences, as well as other times, if you are interested in hearing their global messages of instruction, reproof, etc. The bible says that is why God gave prophets and apostles, for the perfection of the saints, the unity of the faith, the work of the ministry of the Kingdom of God.

Your article quotes “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you” (John 16:13-14). Indeed, the Spirit has led me to join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The bible speaks consistently of there being a Church, a group of leaders kept in line by the Prophets and Apostles. The bible says that they are to help with this effort of guiding the Saints etc. We can’t take one scripture and say that’s the whole answer. In other words, just because it says the Spirit will guide, that does not discount the other passages which say God will send prophets Amos 3:7, and other New Testament passages about prophets, and the

“restoration of all things”. A restoration of ALL things would include that the people of God would be together as a group and be led by prophets. There would be no dispute about which doctrines are correct, the voice of the Lord would clarify and reveal doctrines to the Saints in their organized body. There are many passages in the New Testament and Old referring to an organization in the Kingdom of God. It’s not merely Tom thinks the bible means this, George thinks the bible mess that. You see, we need current prophets and apostles, not just records about what they have done in the past. We need someone whose preaching is so powerful that it pierces your soul, someone who has spoken face to face with God. Someone who is called of God by God himself, not just Jerry who thinks he should help out in the community. Sincere efforts by people to help build God’s Kingdom are always appreciated, and God builds His Kingdom with non-members of His Church as well. But for entrance into the kingdom of heaven, you need to be baptized by someone in authority into the Church which embraces the doctrines which God embraces.

Is this mean of me to say? No, it’s religion. It’s conviction to a set of doctrines. Who am I to say any what God has revealed to me is not true? I respect everyone and their beliefs- let them worship God how where or whom they may. I want the same respect from others. If my religion says you are wrong, you can respect that. If your religion says I am wrong, I can respect that. I respect everyone’s beliefs, but I’m not about to change mine just because it’s different from what you believe. Belief is a sacred thing, and God bless you in yours, and me in mine. God bless you in your religion, and me in mine. I eternally respect you in yours, and me in mine. I would die for you and your religions freedom to believe what you want as soon as I would die for one of my religion and their religious freedom. I want political freedom for all religions to worship as they please, and I want to serve and love you as well as I want to serve and love someone in the same religion as myself. I am as always, your friend. That is part of my religion, and I enjoy it thoroughly.

Your article rightly sights the scripture, the spirit “would guide them into “all the truth.””. Indeed, my religion is that the spirit has guided me into the great and many truths embodied in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and I praise God for it!

Based on your article, the philosophy of the Protestants is that the spirit is all they need; if so, why have the bible? Why keep any of the revelations of the New Testament past the page with the quote “would

guide them into “all the truth.””? That is not the last page of the bible, so why is there more? It’s because whenever God gives scripture, it’s from the spirit of God. Now please don’t accuse me of guessing how you would respond to my questions, I am merely responding to the obvious implications of the document you asked me to read.

Your article says that New Testament Apostles had same level of authority as Old Testament Apostles. I agree. Representatives of God they are. And my religion says that there are those kind of Apostles in the earth again today, glory be to God!

Your article quotes the scripture “Paul tells the Corinthians, “If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord” (1 Cor. 14.37).” Indeed, I believe this scripture, and I say the same applies to modern representatives of Jesus Christ. My religion is that those representatives are to be found in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Your document claims, speaking of the purpose of New Testament era Apostles, as to why they preach, write, etc.: “They do this to record, interpret, and apply to the lives of believers the great truths about the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.” Indeed I agree. Look at the world today, do all the Christian Churches/groups of people who conform to the same doctrines, believe the same thing pertaining to these matters? It doesn’t take long to find out that no, they are quite separate on many of the particulars of these matters. It’s my religion that modern day Apostles, living ones, have the same mission as the ancient Apostles: to testify of Christ, and teach the points of His doctrine in plainness and truth.

Your document says certain things are scripture simply because Paul said so, namely the time that he quotes Luke’s writing and calls that scripture. I similarly believe this, and it’s my religion that whatever modern Prophets and Apostles say is scripture, likewise is scripture. It’s my religion that not only is the bible the word of God, but also The Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and The Pearl of Great Price, and other words from modern Prophets and Apostles. Your religion is that the bible is the only source of God’s word which is applicable to the entire earth. My religion is that the bible as well as modern Prophets and Apostles words are God’s word applicable to the entire earth. Protestants say nay, my interpretation is wrong. But that’s their religion. It’s based on a different interpretation. Protestants say the bible is for no private interpretation- indeed, I don’t have private interpretations, they are

embraced by my entire church. We claim this is how God wants it to be said. God has told us that. It seems that each church has its own interpretation of the bible; if that were not the case, there would only be one Church. It's further my religion that such should be the case. There should only be one Christian Church. My religion is that that church is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

My religion is that religion should not be hard to understand, that Jesus said we need to be as a child to inherit the kingdom of heaven. Are not these explanations simple, and a child capable of understanding them? -as your article says, I agree that all of the New Testament is scripture. However I disagree that all scripture is found in the Old and New Testament which we currently have. One reason why is that the Book of Mormon refers to Old Testament prophets named Zenos and Zenoch and Ezias (apart from Isaiah). My faith is that not all of the records of the prophets of the Jews are in the old testament. I know the bible has been miraculously preserved when looked at as ancient literature, most books never survive to the level the bible has, but yet like I said, and it's ok if we disagree about this, my faith is that some of the books are gone. That being said, it's also my faith that those lost books shall return in a future day, and they will help establish the truth of the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It's my faith that some of these records are lost by honest error, others by evil men trying to hide the truth.

-yes, the book of Mormon is not a grace salvation alone book, neither is the bible; we all need Christ and none can make it on their own, but the entire purpose of the book of Mormon is to get people to see that unless they repent, they and their entire nations will be destroyed by God.

-Joseph Smith had a theophany just like Jesus Christ, John the Revelator, Ezekiel, Daniel, Isaiah, had are theophanies. There are patterns in these which biblical scholars have found. 1. historical prologue 2. question concern problem, a thing they are wrestling with.

3. mission (book containing a wo). 4. they are rejected when trying to share it, and killed. (they tried to kill John many times (but could not)).

This is the same pattern of Joseph Smith! The Book of Mormon is a repent or be destroyed book, it has accounts of two entire nations who would not repent and were destroyed. It's to invite our day to repent or be destroyed!

-as to the LDS faith being based on Joseph Smith being 100% correct and the possibility of him being deceived, it's like Paul. We have part of the New Testament by Paul, what if he was deceived? Is it too dangerous

to base your life off of the principals Paul taught? We get a witness from the Holy Ghost that Paul was called of God to carry on the Church of God, despite his weaknesses. It's always been the same- God sends messengers, however imperfect, like Noah, Moses, Aaron, Peter, Paul, and I say Joseph Smith, and it's up to us to choose whether we are going to follow that divinely appointed leader. We try to be careful to believe not only the dead leaders, but the living ones, that's always been the hardest thing. Now if you don't agree with this, that's ok, I'm merely telling you about my religion.

-when it comes to deciding what is scripture, The Book of Mormon for example, I agree with the article you sent, in its debate as to whether to call Hebrews scripture, they said " whoever its human author may have been, its ultimate author can only have been God himself." Now who makes that call as to whether something must be from God? There is only one truth in the universe, and the Holy Ghost tells us what that is. You can't force someone to believe in the existence of a God, you can't prove that to someone, that's what makes this life a good test, we have to figure it out on our own.

-in your article when it speaks of why Hebrews is in the cannon it says "The majestic glory of Christ shines forth from the pages of the epistle to the Hebrews so brightly that no believer who reads it seriously should ever want to question its place in the canon." That is the same way I feel about the book of Hebrews, and The Book of Mormon. I believe it's true that God had prophets in other nations in antiquity as well , and their witnesses of Jesus Christ have blessed me in many ways giving me unshaken faith in Christ despite of my imperfections.

-I try to overcome my imperfections because I am part of the family of Christ, and I feel that God my father asks me to do things, and I want to do them to please him, and to grow up to become like him. He has been so good to me that I want to grow up to become like him. Not replace him but be one with him like Jesus said, he wants us to be one with him even as he is one with the father. I believe Jesus Christ's atonement which he wrought out in gethsemane and Calvary is so powerful that it can enable to be become like Jesus Christ, to be one with him in desire, in power, in righteousness, in holiness (cleansed by his grace), in wisdom, etc. In almost every conceivable way except us inhabiting the same body. That would contradict many of his sayings if I lost my body (I am the resurrection and the life whoso believeth in me shall never die).

-the article you shared says if a book was written by an apostle, then it should be scripture. I agree. I merely say that there are more Apostles than the rest of Christendom thinks.

-I like the part in your article that says this: “It should not surprise us that the early church should have been able to recognize Hebrews and other writings, not written by apostles, as God’s very words. Had not Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice” (John 10.27)? It should not be thought impossible or unlikely, therefore, that the early church would be able to use a combination of factors, including apostolic endorsement, consistency with the rest of Scripture, and the perception of a writing as “God-breathed” on the part of an overwhelming majority of believers, to decide that a writing was in fact God’s words (through a human author) and therefore worthy of inclusion in the canon. Nor should it be thought unlikely that the church would be able to use this process over a period of time — as writings were circulated to various parts of the early church — and finally to come to a completely correct decision, without excluding any writings that were in fact “God-breathed” and without including any that were not.”

-I want to point this out. You quoted this ““In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world” (Heb. 1:1-2).

-your article says this means God can’t add anything else to scripture, that Jesus is the end of the message so far as scripture goes. I have 2 problems with that. 1. There are more books in the New Testament that were written after Jesus The Son. 2. It never states in this passage that God can’t speak more to us in an official “more scripture” sort of way. It says that God has spoken to us by his Son, and that’s good. But I can’t see anywhere in there where it says he won’t have more messengers coming to us to continue teaching us the words of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, The Son, is the source of scripture.

-you don’t have to agree with this, but I believe Jesus Christ is Jehovah. Jesus said to the pharisees, before Abraham was, I am. They tried to stone him because he was there claiming to be God. And who is God? Jehovah. Now why do I bring this up? To show that all scripture comes from Jesus Christ, whether it’s BC or AD. You don’t have to agree with that. You can believe whatever you want. Also recall Isaiah prophesying of Christ: Unto us a child is born a son is given, and his name shall be called. the Everlasting Father. Christ is our father in that we made

covenants with him to gain salvation. Heavenly Father is our Father in that he birth life to our spirits in the pre-mortal world. The scripture says, “we are his offspring”. Created in his image.

-I don't see how Hebrews 1 and 2 say that revelation has a time of completion. That idea would contradict Amos 3:7, where it says God does nothing except he reveals that thing to his prophets. What does that mean? It means revelation will happen as long as God is doing something. And the writings of the New Testament point to a future great work by God yet to be done.

-the article also sites Rev. 22 being at the last of the bible to say there can be no more revelation, we already talked about that. You agreed with me that it being there doesn't mean what this author says it means. You weren't happy that I spoke about that, that I was guessing what your argument for that would be. As we see by this article, it's a prevalent argument. As we stated earlier, such an interpretation would conflict Amos 3:7, etc. This article says that John knew that his book “The book of Revelation” would be the last in the bible. There is no text that says he knew it would be last in the bible. So the most we can say about this is that John didn't want anyone to mess with his book. Those whom have modified his text to make it say something other than the original message will suffer the consequences he states in Rev. 22. Wo unto them they have caused many to stumble!

-you say that God is in control of all history, and that such means the Holy Bible is all we need. I say that God lets people have their agency to rape children, or to try and alter the bible, both terrible things. But that God provides ways to overcome that; for the rape case there is healing in Christ and eternal reward and justice in heave; for the Holy Bible being modified by wicked men, God has given us the Book of Mormon to make sure we have correct doctrine.

-I like where your article says this “As we read Scripture the Holy Spirit works to convince us that the books we have in Scripture are all from God and are his words to us. “; that would apply to the Book of Mormon. To anything.

-this is sort of on topic. I want to point out that many people interpret the bible differently. At the bible teacher conference, about 700 people were there, and only half of them believed in God. The other half were atheists and thought of the bible merely as interesting literature like Shakespeare. I don't recall the name of this conference, but I suppose you've seen that trend also. Scholars like to make their own interpretations of doctrine.

That's why we need modern messengers officially sent by God. The people can reject those messengers, but they do so to their own condemnation. So some people seem to be sincere yet totally misinterpreting the bible. The world deserves messengers who come onto the scene and declare with boldness that salvation is in Christ Jesus. They say come be baptized according to the command of Christ, into his Church, where his laws are upheld. For how can someone agree to obey Christ (which is what you do at baptism) if you don't know what the laws of Christ are? There are many who disagree about that. Many who claim to be right saying Jesus is here, no he is here, and they argue with each other. And if 3 of them are right, that wouldn't make any sense. Christ is not divided: there is one Lord one faith one baptism.

-the article speaks much of a final revelation. I never see the term final revelation in the bible.

-if the bible contains "there is nothing missing from Scripture that God thinks we need to know for obeying him and trusting him fully." then why do so many disagree about it? Am I an idiot? Are so many people idiots?

-this article condemns ideas that are not in the bible, specifically Mormons. But I remind you that the author of this article gives some of his own ideas that are not specifically in the bible. For example he creates a word called "God-breathed". Also the word "cannon" is not in the bible. These are little examples, but the bigger examples are things we've talked about etc. The doctrines he teaches. One example of your article "3:6 Jude 14-15 does cite 1 Enoch 60.8 and 1.9, and Paul at least twice quotes pagan Greek authors (see Acts 17.28; Titus 1.12), but these citations are more for purposes of illustration than proof. Never are the works introduced with a phrase like, "God says," or "Scripture says," or "it is written," phrases that imply the attribution of divine authority to the words cited." So he is saying that unless it says "thus sayeth the Lord" it's not scripture. That idea is that of the author, it never states that rule in the bible. This is the authors creation, "but these citations are more for purposes of illustration than proof." he says. The main thing the article says is that the cannon of scripture must end. I think that's an assumption he is making based on several passages that could have that meaning, but not necessarily. It's simply one among several possible interpretations. Who has the correct interpretation of the bible? That is a matter of faith. Everyone has the right to believe what they will. I say that my group of believers (my church) and I have the right interpretation, you say you

and your group of believers (your church) have the right interpretation. Can we co-exist? Pleasantly? Of course!

-a person could quote 10000 bible scholars who agree about something, and that doesn't mean it's necessarily true. For example the bible scholars of the day of Jesus said that God could not come down and become a man, but that is exactly what Jesus did. And they tried to stone him for it. The answers never have lied with scholars, always with God and his appointed messengers. He can even use fishermen. All God needs is someone humble enough to say "Thy will be done" when God speaks to them from the heavens. God appeared to Joseph Smith, like he did Moses and "spoke with him face to face" as the bible says Moses did. The Holy Ghost has witnessed this truth to me as I live the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Like Christ said if any man want to know whether I speak doctrine or of myself, let him do the teachings and they'll learn if they are from God or not (John 17).

-the article says to see how you feel when you read books "perhaps with the Book of Mormon or the Qur'an. Is the spiritual effect of these writings on your life positive or negative?" I say when I read the Book of Mormon I feel like serving Jesus Christ.

-your article admits Christ has a Church, "O make thy church, dear Savior, a lamp of purest gold,  
" (which Church is true? Which set of believers have it right? Who will be the people who are together to meet Christ at His Second Coming in Zion? What makes your church stand out amidst 3000 other Christian denominations? The Holy Bible?)

-why say I that there are modern prophets if you will? Among other reasons, its because someone has to orchestrate the gathering of Israel; there will be a place called Zion where Gods people will physically come together geographically to be together as a people ready for the Lord's Second Coming. They will be sheltered from the destructions soon to come upon the whole earth. Also, there are temples where God gives his people eternal power protection promises, where covenants are made. You don't have to agree with me on that, but I've been inside the dedicated temples (the temple you went inside wasn't yet dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ) of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and felt the power inside, and MIGHTY outpourings of the Holy Ghost witnessing to me so deeply that what goes on in there is from God that I can never deny it, not even on my death bed.

-I won't be the least offended if you choose not to believe in my religion. I believe that before we came to earth we lived with God in heaven, and there were two forces, one was Jesus Christ, the other was Satan (Lucifer). Some followed Lucifer, and never got the blessing to come to earth because of that. Those that chose to follow Jesus Christ got the blessing of coming to this earth; that means you and me; we made the correct choice up in heaven, so here we are on earth, and isn't it wonderful? Life is wonderful. It's hard but it's such a wonderful learning experience, and just as there are deep sorrows, there are deep joys. So here we are on earth, and we need to once again choose Jesus Christ or the devil as our leader. We follow one or the other. Following Jesus Christ is the way to pass this test, our "second estate". If we pass the test in this life, we win. We get eternal joy. If you want to know more about what I believe happens in heaven you can ask me, or go to [mormon.org](http://mormon.org) and search "The Plan of Salvation". There are more details than I've told you and it's thrilling.

-if you have a question about something a church leader has said that troubles you, I am happy to respond. Not everything that General Authorities of the Church say constitutes official Church doctrine. It must be something that has been repeatedly taught in the Church and that the Apostles are united in teaching. Members of the Church come from all kinds of backgrounds and they're not always spot on. But the canonized books are what we base the teachings on. Those include 4 books. The Holy Bible. The Book of Mormon. The Doctrine and Covenants. The Pearl of Great Price. It's ok to have questions, they are worth asking. They help us grow.

-I will try to get those books you wanted me to read. If you're interested, I remind you of a book "Shared Beliefs, Honest Differences: A biblical basis for comparing the doctrines of Mormons and other Christians by Dwight E. Monson" that tells parts of where I come from. It's a pretty short book.

-you ask why do I believe in the bible? I've read it and had the Holy Ghost confirm it's truth to me. That is what I do with everything, I seek the confirmation of the Holy Ghost.

-some say that God is loving (I agree), and that a product of that love is passing down to us a perfect bible (I don't agree). I do agree that the bible is useful and is the word of God (as far as it is translated correctly). The doctrine that the bible is the way it is supposed to be isn't a doctrine found in the bible, it's an idea people have. You could suggest that it is

in the bible, but it's a way to interpret the text of the bible, it never says that specifically. For example, there is no passage in the bible that says "the bible as had in 2015, KJV and other versions of your choosing, is exactly how it should be, and no one should bother considering anything else as scripture. By the way, Mormons are wrong." You see, it's all about how one interprets the bible. You have yours, I have mine. I say my faith is very biblical. I say my faith is the most biblical of any faith out there. I could talk to you about any one passage of scripture. You could say the scriptures condemn me, and that's fine. I don't agree with that interpretation. The bible says what it says, but people read into it. They say, "because x is written, y must be true". While that can be done at times and should be, there are other times where it should not be done. Ruling out the possibility of my faith being the right one I would say is one of those times where it should not be done. But then again, you'll say the same thing about your faith.

-of course, "no private interpretation" is a passage in the bible, no scriptures are for private interpretation. Then who interprets them? God. How does he tell us his interpretation? Yes, that public interpretation? By his Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In other words, there are 3000 about Christian denominations. How many of them are condemned for making their own private interpretations? If they agreed on doctrine, they would be "one faith one Lord one baptism", not 3000. If I'm not mistaken you say that it doesn't matter, the whole churches thing. I say, a church represents a set of doctrines. I also say that the bible represents a set of doctrines. I say if everyone believed the same doctrines, they would not go to separate churches which teach different doctrines. My "interpretations" of the bible are not private, go to any member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints around the world (there are more of us outside of the USA than there are inside), and they'll give you the same response about any given doctrine- Jesus, the Fall, resurrection, God, repentance, grace, etc. God has revealed his official doctrine to his official Church. It's the same doctrine that Adam Enoch Noah Moses Elijah Jesus Christ, Paul etc. had, and it's been restored in it's fullness to God's "latter-day" church. We have official books telling what the doctrines of the Church are. One of the foremost of those is called "Gospel Principals". We study from it regularly. If you wish to read it (fairly short), here is a link to it, and you can even download it (it's a worldwide manual we all use in the Church):  
<https://www.lds.org/manual/gospel-principles?lang=eng>

-why do we study from more than just the bible? Because that's a part of our faith. Why do you only study from the bible? Because that's a part of your faith. Does the bible support both of our faiths? We both claim the bible supports our faith and not the other persons'. So what do we do?

We live our religion. I mine, you yours.

-I know the Church is the people, but Jesus Christ is one of those people, and he makes the rules.

-it's been said that people should not speak about religion or politics, because they are bound to disagree. I think it's ok to talk about those things, it's just that people have to decide not to terminate friendships based on those disagreements. We shouldn't be ashamed of the gospel like Paul says. Nor of liberty.

-here is an article by a non-LDS guy who agrees with me that the canon is not necessarily closed:

<http://www.reclaimingthemind.org/blog/2013/05/why-i-believe-the-canon-is-theoretically-open-and-am-fine-with-it/>.

-in conclusion remember I regard all people who believe in Christ as a brother. Though we have different doctrines we can get along as friends just fine. A core part of both of our religions is to try and treat others as we would ourselves be treated; I'm sure I fall short in that here and there, and my explanations here aren't perfect but they are sincere. I won't be the least offended if you choose not to believe in my religion. As always, I wish you all the best, you are my siblings in Christ . -Nate Richardson.

## Biblical Context of Latter-day Saint Doctrine, a House Divided Principle, & The Achilles Heel of Preferring Past Prophets to Modern Prophets – Debate with a Protestant

Protestant:

LDS take scriptures out of context for their doctrines.

Nate (Latter-day Saint):

“Ultimately it boils down to this. The LDS interpret the bible differently than other faiths. We will never agree on bible interpretation. Thank God for the Book of Mormon to clarify bible doctrine, and thank God for modern prophets who clarify doctrine.”

Protestant:

“All Mormonism does is put a twist on very clear passages. It’s called eisegesis.”

Nate

“If the bible is so clear why is Protestantism one of the most divided faiths on earth (hundreds of different churches professing the ‘best’ interpretation of the bible). Ya’ll can’t agree. Mormonism brings new dynamic revelations which bring the scolding of others as they are doctrines of power and authority which hardly anyone can handle. As Jesus was to the Jews, so is Mormonism to the Protestants.

Just like misguided religious persons of the past, you praise prophets of the past (Peter, Paul, etc.) and reject prophets of the present (Joseph Smith, Russel Nelson, etc.). The convenient thing about believing in dead prophets is that they don’t tend to call you out on your misinterpretation of their words. Just like Jews raving about Moses to Jesus.”

Protestant:

“They are in disagreement in “some” things just like LDS are not in agreement over some things. But one thing we are all in agreement in is that the bible is very clear that there was no pre-existence.

That is a baffling view of prophets. Are you saying prophets are true prophets because they are rejected? What about the prophets of Baal in the bible? they were rejected as false prophets in their present time... So

by your logic they were actually true prophets because they were rejected. Logic never seemed to be on the side of Mormonism.”

Nate:

“You conveniently select random bits of pseudo logic to scoff at the Mormons. There are plenty of false prophets today. But Protestants can’t seem to acknowledge the possibility of true prophets living in our day who declare the correct interpretation of God’s word and reveal new words from God. What new Revelations have your prophets come up with to guide the people of our day? None. God speaks today collective messages for society via prophets like he always has done. At least the LDS have 1 united government, unlike the thousands of fragmented churches teaching different doctrines as seen in Protestantism. The LDS are organized in one great body of power to act United for the salvation of the human race. The Protestants are not.”

## What Constitutes Doctrine, Prophets Quotes on

-“It makes no difference what is written or what anyone has said, if what has been said is in conflict with what the Lord has revealed, we can set it aside. My words, and the teaching of any other member of the Church, high or low, if they do not square with the revelations, we need not accept them. Let us have this matter clear. We have accepted the four standard works as the measuring yardsticks, or balances, by which we measure every man’s doctrine. You cannot accept the books written by the authorities of the Church as standards in doctrine, only in so far as they accord with the revealed word in the standard works. If Joseph Fielding Smith writes something which is out of harmony with the revelations, then every member of the Church is duty bound to reject it. If he writes that which is in perfect harmony with the revealed word of the Lord, then it should be accepted.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols., edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 3: 203.)

-“I advise all to go on to perfection and search deeper and deeper into the mysteries of godliness” (Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, 6:363)

-“ 2 And, behold, and lo, this is an ensample unto all those who were ordained unto this priesthood, whose mission is appointed unto them to go forth— 3 And this is the ensample unto them, that they shall speak as they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost. 4 And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation. 5 Behold, this is the promise of the Lord unto you, O ye my servants. 6 Wherefore, be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you; and ye shall bear record of me, even Jesus Christ, that I am the Son of the living God, that I was, that I am, and that I am to come.” (D&C 68:2-6)

-“Our Father in Heaven loves all of His children and desires that they know and understand His plan of happiness. Therefore, He calls prophets, those who have been ordained with power and authority to act in God’s name for the salvation of His children. They are messengers of righteousness, witnesses of Jesus Christ and the infinite power of His

Atonement. They hold the keys of the kingdom of God on earth and authorize the performance of saving ordinances.” (Conf. Report 2015 Oct. By Carol F. McConkie First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/live-according-to-the-words-of-the-prophets?lang=eng&query=words+of+the+prophets>)

-“Concerning the living prophet, the Lord commands the people of His Church: “Thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me; For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith. For by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you.” (Doctrine and Covenants 21:4–6) (Conf. Report 2015 Oct. By Carol F. McConkie First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/live-according-to-the-words-of-the-prophets?lang=eng&query=words+of+the+prophets>)

-“To be in harmony with heaven’s divine purposes, we sustain the prophet and choose to live according to his words.” (Conf. Report 2015 Oct. By Carol F. McConkie First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/live-according-to-the-words-of-the-prophets?lang=eng&query=words+of+the+prophets>)

-“They [the prophets] have the right, the power, and authority to declare the mind and will of [the Lord] ... , subject to ... the President of the Church.” (J. Reuben Clark Jr., “When Are the Writings and Sermons of Church Leaders Entitled to the Claim of Scripture?”)



-“We also sustain President Monson’s counselors and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as prophets, seers, and revelators. “They have the right, the power, and authority to declare the mind and will of [the Lord] . . . , subject to . . . the President of the Church.” (J. Reuben Clark Jr., “When Are the Writings and Sermons of Church Leaders Entitled to the Claim of Scripture?”)They speak in the name of Christ. They prophesy in the name of Christ. They do all things in the name of Jesus Christ. In their words we hear the voice of the Lord and we feel the Savior’s love.” (Conf. Report 2015 Oct. By Carol F. McConkie First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/live-according-to-the-words-of-the-prophets?lang=eng&query=words+of+the+prophets>)

-“Whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.” (Doctrine and Covenants 1:38)

-The Church is “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” (ref)

-“When we choose to live according to the words of the prophets, we are on the covenant path that leads to eternal perfection.” (Conf. Report 2015 Oct. By Carol F. McConkie First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/live-according-to-the-words-of-the-prophets?lang=eng&query=words+of+the+prophets>)

-“In a world threatened by a famine of righteousness and spiritual starvation, we have been commanded to sustain the prophet. As we give heed to, uphold, and affirm prophetic word, we witness that we have the faith to humbly submit to the will, the wisdom, and the timing of the Lord.

“We heed prophetic word even when it may seem unreasonable, inconvenient, and uncomfortable. According to the world’s standards, following the prophet may be unpopular, politically incorrect, or socially unacceptable. But following the prophet is always right. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isaiah 55:9) “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.” ( Proverbs 3:5)” (Conf. Report 2015 Oct. By Carol F. McConkie First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/live-according-to-the-words-of-the-prophets?lang=eng&query=words+of+the+prophets>)

“The Lord honors and favors those who will heed prophetic direction.” (Conf. Report 2015 Oct. By Carol F. McConkie First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/live-according-to-the-words-of-the-prophets?lang=eng&query=words+of+the+prophets>)

-“The Lord “will feed those who trust Him.” (Roger Hoffman, “Consider the Lilies.”) The words of the prophets are like manna to our souls. When we partake, we are blessed, protected, and preserved both temporally and spiritually. When we feast upon their words, we learn how to come unto Christ and live.

“Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote that through the prophets “the Lord reveals the truths of salvation, ... the salvation that is in Christ; and he charts ... the course leading to eternal life. ... In every age the Lord gives his people the direction they need at the moment of their peril and danger. And surely in the days ahead there will be times when nothing but the wisdom of God, descending from heaven and flowing forth from prophetic lips, will be able to save his people.” (Bruce R. McConkie, A New Witness for the Articles of Faith 1985 p478) (Conf. Report 2015 Oct. By Carol F. McConkie First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/live-according-to-the-words-of-the-prophets?lang=eng&query=words+of+the+prophets>)

-“The words of the prophets gave me the faith and hope that I could prepare for and obtain a happy home. Consistently studying the teachings of the prophets, both ancient and modern, sustained me during the strenuous and often exhausting years” (Conf. Report 2015 Oct. By Carol F. McConkie First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/live-according-to-the-words-of-the-prophets?lang=eng&query=words+of+the+prophets>)

-“The words of the prophets in the scriptures and taught from this pulpit are words of comfort, love, strength, and good cheer that embrace us all. (Conf. Report 2015 Oct. By Carol F. McConkie First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/live-according-to-the-words-of-the-prophets?lang=eng&query=words+of+the+prophets>)

-“When we heed the words of the prophets, we build our homes and our lives upon an eternally sure foundation, “the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, ... that when the devil shall

send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to ... misery and endless wo.” (Helaman 5:12) We have a choice. We may choose to ignore, trifle with, trample upon, or rebel against the words of Christ spoken by His ordained servants. But the Savior taught that those who do so will be cut off from His covenant people. (see 3 Nephi 20:23) As we prayerfully read and study sacred prophetic word with faith in Christ, with real intent, the Holy Ghost will speak truth to our minds and hearts. May we open our ears to hear, our hearts to understand, and our minds that the mysteries of God may be unfolded to our view. (See Mosiah 2:9) (Conf. Report 2015 Oct. By Carol F. McConkie First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/live-according-to-the-words-of-the-prophets?lang=eng&query=words+of+the+prophets>)

-“May we choose to stand with the prophets and live according to their words until we become unified in faith, purified in Christ, and filled with the knowledge of the Son of God. (Conf. Report 2015 Oct. By Carol F. McConkie First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/live-according-to-the-words-of-the-prophets?lang=eng&query=words+of+the+prophets>)

-“A few question their faith when they find a statement made by a Church leader decades ago that seems incongruent with our doctrine. There is an important principle that governs the doctrine of the Church. The doctrine is taught by all 15 members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve. It is not hidden in an obscure paragraph of one talk. True principles are taught frequently and by many. Our doctrine is not difficult to find. The leaders of the Church are honest but imperfect men. Remember the words of Moroni: “Condemn me not because of mine imperfection, neither my father ... ; but rather give thanks unto God that he hath made manifest unto you our imperfections, that ye may learn to be more wise than we have been” (Ether 12:6) (Neil L. Andersen, “Trial of Your Faith,” Ensign (November 2012).)

-“There may be some things that the First Presidency do; that the Apostles do, that cannot for the moment be explained; yet the spirit, the motives that inspire the action can be understood, because each member of the Church has a right to have that measure of the Spirit of God that they can judge as to those who are acting in their interests or otherwise.”

(Lorenzo Snow, “A Serious ordeal, etc.,” in Conference Report (October 1898), 54.)

-“a prophet was a prophet only when he was acting as such” (Joseph Smith, History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 7 volumes, edited by Brigham H. Roberts, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957), 5:265. Volume 5 link; See also Joseph Smith, Jr., Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, selected by Joseph Fielding Smith, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1976), 278. off-site)

-“Here we must have in mind—must know—that only the President of the Church, the Presiding High Priest, is sustained as Prophet, Seer, and Revelator for the Church, and he alone has the right to receive revelations for the Church, either new or amendatory, or to give authoritative interpretations of scriptures that shall be binding on the Church.... When any man, except the President of the Church, undertakes to proclaim one unsettled doctrine, as among two or more doctrines in dispute, as the settled doctrine of the Church, we may know that he is not “moved upon by the Holy Ghost,” unless he is acting under the direction and by the authority of the President. Of these things we may have a confident assurance without chance for doubt or quibbling.” (J. Reuben Clark, Jr., “Church Leaders and the Scriptures,” [original title “When Are the Writings or Sermons of Church Leaders Entitled to the Claim of Scripture?”]Immortality and Eternal Life: Reflections from the Writings and Messages of President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., Vol, 2, (1969-70): 221; address to Seminary and Institute Teachers, BYU (7 July 1954); reproduced in Church News (31 July 1954); also reprinted in Dialogue 12/2 (Summer 1979): 68–81.)

-“All over the Church you’re being asked this: “What does the Church think about this or that?” Have you ever heard anybody ask that question? “What does the Church think about the civil rights legislation?” “What do they think about the war?” “What do they think about drinking Coca-Cola or Sanka coffee?” Did you ever hear that? “What do they think about the Democratic Party or ticket or the Republican ticket?” Did you ever hear that? “How should we vote in this forthcoming election?” Now, with most all of those questions, if you answer them, you’re going to be in trouble. Most all of them. Now, it’s the smart man that will say, “There’s only one man in this church that speaks for the Church, and I’m not that one man.” I think nothing could get you into deep water quicker than to answer people on these things, when they say, “What does the Church think?” and you want to be smart,

so you try to answer what the Church's policy is. Well, you're not the one to make the policies for the Church. You just remember what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians. He said, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2). Well now, as teachers of our youth, you're not supposed to know anything except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. On that subject you're expected to be an expert. You're expected to know your subject. You're expected to have a testimony. And in that you'll have great strength. If the President of the Church has not declared the position of the Church, then you shouldn't go shopping for the answer. (Harold B. Lee, *Teachings of Harold B. Lee* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1996), 445. Gospelink (requires subscription))

-the First Presidency now approves all statements published on the Church's official website

-"Question 14: Do you believe that the President of the Church, when speaking to the Church in his official capacity is infallible?  
Answer: We do not believe in the infallibility of man. When God reveals anything it is truth, and truth is infallible. No President of the Church has claimed infallibility." (Charles W. Penrose, "Peculiar Questions Briefly Answered," *Improvement Era* 15 no. 11 (September 1912).

-"Not every statement made by a Church leader, past or present, necessarily constitutes doctrine. A single statement made by a single leader on a single occasion often represents a personal, though well-considered, opinion, but is not meant to be officially binding for the whole Church. With divine inspiration, the First Presidency (the prophet and his two counselors) and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (the second-highest governing body of the Church) counsel together to establish doctrine that is consistently proclaimed in official Church publications. This doctrine resides in the four "standard works" of scripture (the Holy Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price), official declarations and proclamations, and the Articles of Faith. Isolated statements are often taken out of context, leaving their original meaning distorted." (LDS Newsroom, "Approaching Mormon Doctrine," (4 May 2007).)

-"The position is not assumed that the men of the New Dispensation —its prophets, apostles, presidencies, and other leaders— are without faults or infallible, rather they are treated as men of like passions with their fellow men." (James R. Clark, quoting B. H. Roberts,

Messages of the First Presidency, edited by James R. Clark, Vol. 4, (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1970), p. xiv–xv.)

-“An individual may fall by the wayside, or have views, or give counsel which falls short of what the Lord intends. But the voice of the First Presidency and the united voice of those others who hold with them the keys of the kingdom shall always guide the Saints and the world in those paths where the Lord wants them to be.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, “Eternal Keys and the Right to Preside,” *Ensign* (July 1972), 88.)

-“Revelations from God . . . are not constant. We believe in continuing revelation, not continuous revelation. We are often left to work out problems without the dictation or specific direction of the Spirit. That is part of the experience we must have in mortality. Fortunately, we are never out of our Savior’s sight, and if our judgment leads us to actions beyond the limits of what is permissible and if we are listening, . . . the Lord will restrain us by the promptings of his Spirit.” (Dallin H. Oaks, “Teaching and Learning by the Spirit,” *Ensign* (March 1997), 14.)

-“Even with the best of intentions, [Church government] does not always work the way it should. Human nature may express itself on occasion, but not to the permanent injury of the work.” (Boyd K. Packer, “I Say unto You, Be One,” in *BYU Devotional and Fireside Speeches, 1990–1991* (Provo, Utah: University Publications, 1991), 84.)

-“When there is to be anything different from that which the Lord has told us already, he will give it to his prophet not to some Tom, Dick, or Harry that is thumbing his way across the country as we have had people tell the story; and not through someone, as another story relates, who swooned and came up and gave a revelation. I have said, ‘Do you suppose that when the Lord has his prophet on the earth, that he is going to take some round-about means of revealing things to his children? That is what he has a prophet for, and when he has something to give to this Church, he will give it to the President, and the President will see that the presidents of stakes and missions get it, along with the General Authorities; and they in turn will see that the people are advised of any new change’” (Harold B. Lee, “The Place of the Living Prophet, Seer, and Revelator” [address to CES religious educators, July 8, 1964], 11; emphasis added).

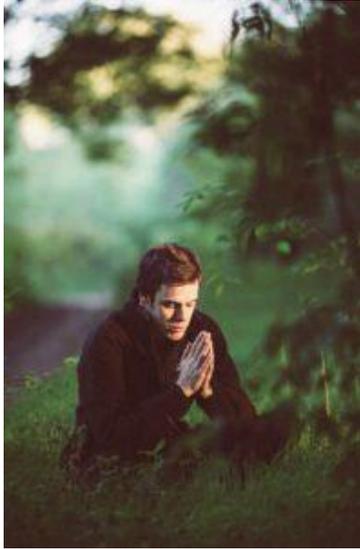
-“Of all mortal men, we should keep our eyes most firmly fixed on the captain, the prophet, seer, and revelator, and president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This is the man who stands

closest to the fountain of living waters. There are some heavenly instructions for us that we can only receive through the prophet. A good way to measure your standing with the Lord is to see how you feel about, and act upon, the inspired words of his earthly representative, the prophet-president. The inspired words of the president are not to be trifled with. All men are entitled to inspiration, and various men are entitled to revelation for their particular assignment. But only one man stands as the Lord's spokesman to the Church and the world, and he is the president of the Church. The words of all other men should be weighed against his inspired words" (President Ezra Taft Benson "Jesus Christ—Gifts and Expectations," New Era, May 1975, 16).

-Seminary and Institute teachers are not General Authorities of the church but merely hired teachers by the church education department.

-“ President Brigham Young sent his father, David, and the other young men on their rescue mission, President Young instructed them to do everything they possibly could to save the handcart companies, even at the peril of their own lives. 6 Their acts of bravery were specifically to “follow the prophet Brigham Young” and by so doing express their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Elder Cook, Conf. Report Apr. 2008, Give Heed Unto The Prophets Words, <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2008/04/give-heed-unto-the-prophets-words?lang=eng&query=words+of+the+prophets>)

## Sustaining Church Leaders & Following Conscience



### Sections:

- INTRODUCTION
- PROPHET FALLIBILITY
- REVELATION VS OPINION / “BEST PRACTICES”
- GOVERNMENT PRESSURE
- STAND FOR PRINCIPLE
- TEMPLE RECOMMEND STANDARD
- OBEDIENCE OF ABRAHAM & NAAMAN
- 1 KINGS 13: FOLLOW GOD 1ST, PROPHETS 2ND
- THE PROPHECIED TEST: WILL WE OBEY GOD OR MAN?
- GETTING REVELATION FOR YOUR STEWARDSHIP...AND BEYOND, IF...
- BE WISE: EXAMPLE OF BRETHERN WHO PLAYED WITH SNAKES IN JOSEPH’S DAY
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- PROPHET WONT LEAD CHURCH ASTRAY DOCTRINALLY
- FOLLOW LONG TIME REPEATED COUNCIL
- COMMAND TO FOLLOW THE PROPHET LIKE THE COMMAND TO HONOR PARENTS
- FOCUS ON RIGHTEOUS LIVING, NOT THE BAND WAGON
- ADDITIONAL STUDY

### **INTRODUCTION:**

It's interesting how when a prophet says something popular everybody yells follow the prophet but when the prophet says in scripture to live the positive aspects of the word of wisdom and other pesky instructions, nobody's interested.

It's not blind obedience that we seek.

There are prophecies that in the latter days, there will be some major issues in the church. President Packer said not all persecution of the saints comes from outside the church.

### **PROPHET FALLIBILITY:**

Prophets can speak as prophets and as themselves, and the DOCTRINE of the church is that they are not infallible. To suggest that they are is to put trust in the arm of flesh.

What happened to emphasizing personal revelation, teaching correct principles, and letting members govern themselves on matters? Is the following scripture (with two variants in the Book of Mormon) still valid?

"Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." -- Jeremiah 17:5

A recent example of prophet folly is meet the Mormon campaign. Nelson said after it that it's an inadvertent victory for Satan when we call ourselves Mormons!!! That aligns with scripture which tells the name we

are to use. This should teach us to be wise and not prophet worship by saying people are cut off spiritually if they don't act on every opinion a prophet gives. Did Thomas Monson's incorrect use of the title Mormon sink the church? No. Are prophets and the directions which they and their counselors officially give infallible? No.

### **REVELATION VS OPINION / "BEST PRACTICES"**

When choosing to follow the Lord or the arm of flesh, we often don't even have a clear voice on the arm of flesh side to follow. So forget that side for a moment and focus on the Lord's side.

Did the prophets words come as a revelation? Did he say if was from the Lord, or just advice, just an idea to follow government leaders' advice as good citizens? The issue is that sometimes the government is wrong. Being a good citizen sometimes means going against the norm.

Did the prophet appeal to science or to God? To government or to God? This is how we know when he is giving advice vs giving revelation.

The prophet Joseph Smith taught that "a prophet is a prophet only when he is acting as such." (i.e. getting and relaying an answer from the Lord.)

May God inspire and direct our prophet in any issue so that he can say "thus saith the Lord", and give us the truth from that source to which we look to him for, the Lord.

Wait and watch in faith for the Lord's hand to be revealed on any issue. This is the process that the Lord has given for us to follow, and we can expect to receive an answer.

If the prophet / First Presidency relies on medical opinions and appeals to science, I feel that it's absolutely appropriate for members to challenge them on this without any reservations.

Science is all about testing, seeing if things hold up with observation and evidence. Unquestioned science ceases to be science. So if we appeal to science, it is out duty to scrutinize it all we can.

If they receive direct revelation from the Lord then this is another story, as the Lord is the ultimate source of all truth.

### **GOVERNMENT PRESSURE:**

President Nelson said to get the holy spirit or we won't survive spiritually.

Some statements could be more about keeping the church out of trouble than anything else.

In Nazi Germany the more corrupt the government became, the more it forced its influence on the churches.

President Woodruff illustrated with ending plural marriage that when things become extremely tyrannical, sometimes it is God's will to let go of some higher laws temporarily, like a slave must let go of freedom for a season. Granted, if the saints in general were living up to God's standards, he would have protected them and allowed them to continue the higher laws, but when the general body of the saints failed, those who were not failing had to come down with them.

It's our duty to resist tyranny within reason up till the last moment possible, even giving our lives as needed. We understand that when God is with us, no one can be against us. We must be willing to stand alone, and at times, the brethren had to lie about practicing plural marriage. As the scripture said, it is better to follow God than man. Abraham had to lie about Sarah not being his wife. Nephi had to kill Laban despite the instruction of "thou shalt not kill." These are difficult situations which require utmost deliberation and prayer.

The church is a corporation; the corporation of the 1<sup>st</sup> presidency has to conform to laws; their preaching in conference is the gospel, but the structure entity rules of a US Corporation are bound by laws. The church has paid employees and must comply as an entity to law. The gospel will never force anyone to do anything, Satan is in charge of force.

### **STAND FOR PRINCIPLE**

We must all listen to conscience. If you feel you're doing your very best I don't think you would be kept from any blessing either way.

If you're impressed to do something that's up to you. This said eventually there comes a point where right and wrong are on two opposite sides and we must pick the right option as the test of our souls.

Many issues are not a deciding factor of righteousness particularly for those unaware of what they're doing if they're ignorant for a valid reason.

We need to stand for principle even when it's not popular in the church (a popular example is homeschooling, it used to be well spoken of in the church, these days just about everyone will shun you for it, in or out of the church).

As popular as it is these days, blind obedience is not a doctrine of the kingdom. We all must decide which issues are important for us to take a stand on, but we should not be outspoken critics of the church or its leaders. We should not develop animosity against the church for when it sees things differently than we do.

If you feel something is inherently wrong and yet do it just because someone said to, no matter who that person is, that would be an issue.

In "Ender's Game" (by Latter-day Saint author Orson Scott Card), Ender is selected as someone they can rely on based on WHY he did what he did more so than what he did. I'm sure there are better examples of that principle elsewhere, but Card does a pretty good job of it. In the end both the why and the what matter, though this is a point to consider.

### **TEMPLE RECOMMEND STANDARD**

It's still up to us to choose on certain issues, various opinions are still considered in good standing in the church.

If certain counsels are a test for the saints, I think it is a test to see who will follow conscience, and who will follow blindly.

Some bishops have been known to overreach and deny temple recommends to people who have differing opinions on some things. They fail to recognize that a person can sustain the president of the church while having some private opinions which are not mainstream.

### **OBEDIENCE OF ABRAHAM & NAAMAN**

Abraham being told by God to slay his son: notice this was God himself giving direct instruction to his prophet, it wasn't a prophet saying "authorities say we should slay our sons, I therefore highly recommend it."

Naaman being healed by obeying a prophet: notice that prophet didn't say "most authorities suggest you wash in the river 7 times, I urge you to do that." No, it was something completely random so there could be no mistake that the healing was by the power of God, not the wisdom of man.

### **1 KINGS 13: FOLLOW GOD 1<sup>ST</sup>, PROPHETS 2<sup>ND</sup>**

One old testament scripture story (1 Kings 13) demonstrates following conscience and being truly tested well. A prophet was told to not eat until a certain time/attainment. On the way, he met another prophet who who said an angel of the Lord told him to invite him to his house and feed him. The prophet who was told by God to fast reasoned that if this messenger from God revealed this to a prophet, it must be the right thing to do. Well he goes and eats at the other prophets house. During the meal, the prophet hosting the meal said he got a revelation from God that the other prophet was told by God to fast until a certain time/destination, and that because that prophet failed to OBEY THE DIRECT REVELATION OF GOD TO HIM, he would perish. He leaves and perishes. So. What is the test? What has God told you to do? Did the prophet who hosted the meal know he was part of the test? Surely he wouldn't have invited the other prophet to eat if he knew it would lead to his demise.

I won't flush this all out, but think about the implications of this scripture. It is incumbent upon to each of us to not follow blindly, but to seek and do the will of God. God may be testing us indeed.

None of this undermines the role of the prophet. Sometimes his hands are tied. Blessings of prophets leading the church are tied to the faithfulness of the members. If the members aren't faithful, they have no promise. That's how ALL of God's promised blessings work! Alma and others have clearly taught that the less a person/people will listen to God, the less God will reveal, until we have nothing. Fortunately we are in the dispensation prophesied to last into the millennium. Things may get crazy, but we can stay in the church, and things will work out as we do our best therein.

### **THE PROPHECIED TEST: WILL WE OBEY GOD OR MAN?**

Who will be brave enough to stand against the tide when advice comes which doesn't align with good thinking and scripture?

When I hear people say that following a questionable recommendation is the test of valiant faith, I question the foundations of the faith of that person. Is their faith in Christ, or man?

One example is when saints are guilt tripped for choosing to abstain from meats. Don't they know that our most current revelation, the D&C, says that abstaining from meats is God's preferred system, and that meats are just for famine, and best if not used at all?

So what IS the prophesied TEST which Heber C Kimball and others have spoken of?

It has to do with defending Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon and other eternal Christian truths in a world which is increasingly rejecting them. Rejecting the evolution of species is a big part of that test which many are failing btw.

It has to do with staying in the church even when we disagree with some policies and trends and standing for the right all the time.

Are you aware of the movement within the church education system and church history department to downplay Joseph Smith, to belittle his character and the character of his family, to undermine the inspiration of the Book of Mormon, to undermine the prophetic role of Joseph Smith, to undermine the First Vision as a real event, and other related issues in which progressive scholars taking over these departments are trying to write a “New History” of our church? Standing against this tide is surely a great test, and the faith of many are failing in its wake.

D&C 101:5 about following all Gods servants words as from his mouth was about Joseph Smith. As President Hinckley has taught, Joseph was the great law giver and revelator of this dispensation, and we look to live what he received more so than look for more revelations. The truth has been taught for 200 years now, and we should know our doctrine well enough by now to not be swayed by every wind of opinion.

### **GETTING REVELATION FOR YOUR STEWARDSHIP...AND BEYOND, IF...**

As Moses said, would to God that all were prophets. We aren't the voice for the whole church, but we are capable and expected to receive personal revelation applicable to ourselves and our family. Therefore, I don't tell you what to do but say you must find out your duty, even if it's different than mine.

One common misconception about getting revelation only for your stewardship is as follows: some think we can only know what applies to our family. But not so. God said he will reveal anything and everything to the least of saints as soon as they are ready for it. We can know about world conditions, church doctrine, etc. The constraint is that if we get revelation for something not in our stewardship, we don't preach it as the way. We can suggest ideas, but we should not claim to be receiving revelation FOR the church.

## **BE WISE: EXAMPLE OF BRETHERN WHO PLAYED WITH SNAKES IN JOSEPH'S DAY**

Remember Joseph Smith had some elders who played with a poisonous serpent with bare feet because the new testament promised protection against poisonous serpents? Well they got bit and very sick. Joseph responded to the situation by saying they the promise is true, but we don't need to be foolish about it.

## **THE HIGHER LAW**

It has been taught that to be exalted, one must be able to think for themselves despite what everyone else is doing. This is wise. Yes we have inspired leaders, but this does NOT neutralize our responsibility to be wise and prudent.

You don't be punished for taking a higher road, living a higher law. In fact, like switching to the correct name of the church, it pleases God when you do live higher law.

Look at this easy example: before the pandemic, President Nelson famously said to get your rest and vitamin pills. Those things certainly will improve the health of most Americans and people everywhere. But what if people were already getting their vitamins through natural foods which have more diverse and bioavailable vitamins and phytochemicals that the pills ever could? What pharisee would say such a person then needs to take more vitamins just because the prophet said so? Such a person would OBVIOUSLY be looking beyond the mark.

As we see with this case, the prophet will speak for what most people need. If the people know addition, he will urge them to go learn multiplication. But if you already know multiplication, you should focus your efforts on calculus. This said, some things are eternal like charity - everyone can always work on charity.

## **PROPHET WONT LEAD CHURCH ASTRAY DOCTRINALLY**

The prophet will never lead the church astray on doctrinal issues, that is true. That's why Brigham died when he started really pushing the incorrect aspects of Adam God teachings (a misunderstanding of Joseph's teachings, Brigham was mostly correct, but a few serious errors mixed in that had to be stopped, and that's ok).

But on policy, yes they can be mistaken. And that's ok.

Look at a recent example, Meet The Mormons, which focused on calling ourselves Mormons, was the next prophet identified as an "inadvertent victory for Satan" as it is inferior to using the correct name of the church. President. Monson was an amazing prophet but that movement was less inspired than it could have been, and that's ok.

## **FOLLOW LONG TIME REPEATED COUNCIL**

Some in the religious pro-vax hit pieces ironically call for heeding repeated words from prophets. This is right. Consider the 200-year narrative of TRANSLATING the book of Mormon with the URIM & THUMMIM as compared to the new narrative which was hinted at in general conference recently about it being more of a REVELATION with stones in a hat instead. This is another major part of the TEST. It's an example of following truly repeated teachings & counsel rather than current trends.

Some scoff when church leaders speak against evolution, saying it is the error of the prophet. But look at this teaching – it has been taught in the church from the beginning, it has been taught by MANY prophets, over MANY years. Evolution is in fact anti-Christ, and those who push for it will regret it, they are actively pushing against the word of the Lord.

When it comes to health, the repeated counsel is to take care of our bodies proactively with nutrition rest and exercise. Yes we also believe

in using modern medicine IF we are aware and able to discern when such becomes politicized and neutralized in its effectiveness. Magic quick fixes have NEVER been God's plan for health.

### **COMMAND TO FOLLOW THE PROPHET LIKE THE COMMAND TO HONOR PARENTS**

Remember the commandment to honor your parents? That was given because 99 times out of 100, they're going to give good God-fearing counsel to you. But sometimes, there are false traditions of our fathers which we must leave behind. The command to follow the prophet is similar, he is the steward father of the church and 9/10 gets it right.

Its not always the right thing to obey a parent if the parent's counsel is corrupt. For example: if a parent says its ok to have premarital sex, they're just plain wrong, and no, you won't be blessed for premarital sex just because your parents said its ok. Premarital sex violates eternal laws of nature and can NEVER bring a fullness of joy like God's laws can. There is NO situation in which it is the will of God for you to have unlawful sexual relations. This demonstrates the eternal law that outside of God's law, there is no promise, life, or joy.

Either way we take on an issue, it's not going to sink us to hell or exalt us to heaven. It's the character traits we are learning that will lead us down the path of sin or up the road of righteousness. So lets be careful that we don't get on the high hog of calling people as being on "the high road to apostasy". I'm not saying we shouldn't judge, to remove judgement is to remove mercy. I'm saying lets remove premature and unwise judgment.

Well has it been said that to honor a parent who is in the wrong, we must do the right regardless. These principles could apply to following counsel of church leaders as well.

### **FOCUS ON RIGHTEOUS LIVING, NOT THE BAND WAGON**

I'm more worried about keeping the commandments to love my neighbor as myself, and the other long repeated instructions of this dispensation than I am concerned about passing issues of the day. We all need to start thinking for ourselves and getting truer to our real religion and less obsessed with band wagon pop culture solutions to life's problems. We can't shift all our thinking to a prophet or anyone else.

**ADDITIONAL STUDY:**

HANNAH STODDARD / JOSEPH SMITH FOUNDATION ARTICLE  
ON FORGOTTEN PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINING LEADERS

<https://josephsmithfoundation.org/10-largely-forgotten-but-timeless-principles-in-sustaining-leaders/>

## Continuing Revelation from God

-The records of scripture got corrupted (God lets bad things happen, like child abuse etc.; he respects the agency of people, there must be opposition in this life if we are to grow) and He used Joseph Smith to get the records back into shape.

-Saying that God is the person who has caused the bible to be as it is now is merely an assumption that can't be backed by the scriptures themselves.

-My plea to anyone wondering whether Joseph Smith was a prophet, would be to read The Book of Mormon with an open heart and pray to ask God weather it is true. That is how I learned it is true. I study the Bible as much as the Book of Mormon, they are anchors of my faith in Jesus Christ.

-See also this document I've put together explaining why The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints claims to be the only true church on the earth, <https://richardsonstudies.wordpress.com/category/the-only-true-church/>. You don't have to believe it, but this is my attempt to explain it. I love everyone and wish everyone the best no matter what they believe, though I can't help but be excited by what I have found in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

-Ezek. 37:16-22: this speaks of a stick, namely a record or scroll, where it's one stick is written for Judah, the record of the Jews, the Bible. That is what the bible is all about, the history of the Jews. Then another stick, that of Joseph and his posterity. That is what the Book of Mormon is, the story begins with Lehi, whom is a defandant of Manasseh, whom is a defandant of Joseph sold into Egypt, a son of Israel. Lehi leaves Jerusalem and goes to the new world, America. The Native American ancestors are his descendants. These nations, America and Palestine/Israel will become united in the faith of Jesus Christ. The Bible and the Book of Mormon are how God is making that happen.

“16 Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions:

17 And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.

18 ¶And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these?

19 Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand.

20 ¶And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes.

21 And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land:

22 And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all.”

–Joseph Smith remarked, “I believe the Bible as it read when it came from the pen of the original writers.” (Joseph Smith, Jr., Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, selected by Joseph Fielding Smith, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1976), 327.) This is the same thing that the drafters of the Chicago Statement of Biblical Inerrancy would state more than a century later. (see

[http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism\\_and\\_the\\_Bible/Insufficient](http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism_and_the_Bible/Insufficient))

–Joseph Smith taught that the principal that Jesus Christ’s Church has always been governed by is REVELATION. Whatever the current need is, that is what the people must do. For example, God at one passage says “thou shalt not kill”. In another passage he says “thou shalt utterly destroy”. These are bible passages.

–It’s not a new issue that people will accept what the prophets of old said, but not be willing to listen to the current prophets. Amos 3:7 says that God will do nothing but that he will reveal his secret to his servants the prophets. Another example, the pharisees were willing to accept Moses, but not Jesus. Or another example, originally the gospel was only to be taken to the Jews, then by revelation, the Apostles were shown that the gospel could be taken to the gentiles also. God said, in effect, call not unclean what I have made clean.

–I have also compiled this document showing some uses of the Joseph Smith translation of the bible as well as why the KJV is the best version of the bible not considering the Joseph Smith

Translation: <https://richardsonstudies.wordpress.com/2015/05/03/the->

joseph-smith-translation-precious-truths-restored-by-w-jeffrey-marsh/  
–Examples of “lost scripture”

Lost writing

Biblical citation to the lost writing

Book of the Wars of the Lord

Numbers 21:14

Book of Jasher

Joshua 10:13, 2 Samuel 1:18

Book of the Acts of Solomon

1 Kings 11:41

Book of Samuel the Seer

1 Chronicles 29:29

Book of Gad the Seer

1 Chronicles 29:29

Book of Nathan the Prophet

1 Chronicles 29:29, 2 Chronicles 9:29

Prophecy of Ahijah

2 Chronicles 9:29

Visions of Iddo the Seer

2 Chronicles 9:29, 2 Chronicles 12:15, 2 Chronicles 13:22

Book of Shemaiah

2 Chronicles 12:15

Book of Jehu

2 Chronicles 20:34

Sayings of the Seers

2 Chronicles 33:19

Lament for Josiah

2 Chronicles 35:25

Paul’s epistle to Corinthians before our “1 Corinthians”

1 Corinthians 5:9

Paul’s possible earlier Ephesians epistle

Ephesians 3:3

Paul’s epistle to Church at Laodicea

Colossians 4:16

1 Enoch 1:19 and The Assumption of Moses

Jude 1:14-15

1 Enoch

“It influenced Matthew, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, Hebrews, 1

John, Jude (which quotes it directly) and Revelation (with numerous points of contact)...in molding New Testament doctrines concerning the nature of the Messiah, the Son of Man, the messianic kingdom, demonology, the future, resurrection, the final judgment, the whole eschatological theater, and symbolism.”[2]

(see

[http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism\\_and\\_the\\_Bible/Lost\\_scripture](http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism_and_the_Bible/Lost_scripture))

-One evidence of the continuation of God’s word is that in the Greek text of the New Testament in the Book of Revelations when it says there is a sword continually proceeding out of the mouth of God, the Greek word used suggests not only a sword coming out of his mouth, but a sword continually proceeding out of his mouth. The sword is used in the scriptures as a symbol of the word of God. This suggests God’s word never ceases, and he will judge us according to all the words he has revealed to mankind. (BYU Professor of Attic Greek Stephen Bay supplied the translation).

–Other scriptures (such as Deuteronomy 4:2, Deuteronomy 12:32, and Proverbs 30:6) likewise forbid additions; were the critics’ arguments to be self-consistent, they would have to then discard everything in the New Testament and much of the Old, since these verses predate “other scripture” added by God through later prophets. (see

[http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism\\_and\\_the\\_Bible/%22Adding\\_to%22\\_or\\_%22taking\\_away\\_from%22/Further\\_Reading](http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism_and_the_Bible/%22Adding_to%22_or_%22taking_away_from%22/Further_Reading))

-Further evidence that Rev. 22:19 is not referring to the entire bible when it reads “words of the book of this prophecy” is found if one reads Revelation 1:3,11 (see

[http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism\\_and\\_the\\_Bible/%22Adding\\_to%22\\_or\\_%22taking\\_away\\_from%22/Further\\_Reading](http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism_and_the_Bible/%22Adding_to%22_or_%22taking_away_from%22/Further_Reading))

–Even if the passage in Revelation meant that no man could add to scripture; it does not forbid that God may, through a prophet, add to the Word of God. If this were not possible, then the Bible could never have come into existence. (see

[http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism\\_and\\_the\\_Bible/%22Adding\\_to%22\\_or\\_%22taking\\_away\\_from%22/Further\\_Reading](http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism_and_the_Bible/%22Adding_to%22_or_%22taking_away_from%22/Further_Reading))

-Noted Biblical scholar Bart Ehrman wrote:

The very real danger that [New Testament] texts could be modified at will, by scribes who did not approve of their wording, is evident in other ways as well. We need always to remember that the copyists of the early Christian writings were reproducing their texts in a world in which there

were not only no printing presses or publishing houses but also no such thing as copyright law. How could authors guarantee that their texts were not modified once put into circulation? The short answer is that they could not. That explains why authors would sometimes call curses down on any copyists who modified their texts without permission. We find this kind of imprecation already in one early Christian writing that made it into the New Testament, the book of Revelation, whose author, near the end of his text, utters a dire warning [quotes Revelation 22:18–19]. (see

[http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism\\_and\\_the\\_Bible/%22Adding\\_to%22\\_or\\_%22taking\\_away\\_from%22/Further\\_Reading](http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism_and_the_Bible/%22Adding_to%22_or_%22taking_away_from%22/Further_Reading))

-“These last records [The Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, etc.], which thou hast seen among the Gentiles, shall establish the truth of the first [The Bible], which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and previous things which have been taken away from them...” (1 Nephi 13:40)

-The ancient Book of Mormon prophet Nephi understood how critics would respond to the Book of Mormon. His answer for the critics is this: “Yea, wo be unto him that hearkeneth unto the precepts of men, and denieth the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost! Yea, wo be unto him that saith: We have received, and we need no more! And in fine, wo unto all those who tremble, and are angry because of the truth of God! For behold, he that is built upon the rock receiveth it with gladness; and he that is built upon a sandy foundation trembleth lest he shall fall. Wo be unto him that shall say: We have received the word of God, and we need no more of the word of God, for we have enough! For behold, thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have. Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men, save their precepts shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost.” (2 Nephi 28:26-31)

-Elder Holland answers the question with this address:

“Some Christians, in large measure because of their genuine love for the Bible, have declared that there can be no more authorized scripture beyond the Bible. In thus pronouncing the canon of revelation closed,

our friends in some other faiths shut the door on divine expression that we in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints hold dear: the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and the ongoing guidance received by God’s anointed prophets and apostles. Imputing no ill will to those who take such a position, nevertheless we respectfully but resolutely reject such an unscriptural characterization of true Christianity.

One of the arguments often used in any defense of a closed canon is the New Testament passage recorded in Revelation 22:18: “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of ... this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.” However, there is now overwhelming consensus among virtually all biblical scholars that this verse applies only to the book of Revelation, not the whole Bible. Those scholars of our day acknowledge a number of New Testament “books” that were almost certainly written after John’s revelation on the Isle of Patmos was received. Included in this category are at least the books of Jude, the three Epistles of John, and probably the entire Gospel of John itself. 1 Perhaps there are even more than these.

But there is a simpler answer as to why that passage in the final book of the current New Testament cannot apply to the whole Bible. That is because the whole Bible as we know it—one collection of texts bound in a single volume—did not exist when that verse was written. For centuries after John produced his writing, the individual books of the New Testament were in circulation singly or perhaps in combinations with a few other texts but almost never as a complete collection. Of the entire corpus of 5,366 known Greek New Testament manuscripts, only 35 contain the whole New Testament as we now know it, and 34 of those were compiled after A.D. 1000. 2

The fact of the matter is that virtually every prophet of the Old and New Testament has added scripture to that received by his predecessors. If the Old Testament words of Moses were sufficient, as some could have mistakenly thought them to be, 3 then why, for example, the subsequent prophecies of Isaiah or of Jeremiah, who follows him? To say nothing of Ezekiel and Daniel, of Joel, Amos, and all the rest. If one revelation to one prophet in one moment of time is sufficient for all time, what justifies these many others? What justifies them was made clear by Jehovah Himself when He said to Moses, “My works are without end, and ... my words ... never cease.” 4

One Protestant scholar has inquired tellingly into the erroneous doctrine of a closed canon. He writes: “On what biblical or historical grounds has the inspiration of God been limited to the written documents that the church now calls its Bible? ... If the Spirit inspired only the written documents of the first century, does that mean that the same Spirit does not speak today in the church about matters that are of significant concern?”<sup>5</sup> We humbly ask those same questions.

Continuing revelation does not demean or discredit existing revelation. The Old Testament does not lose its value in our eyes when we are introduced to the New Testament, and the New Testament is only enhanced when we read the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ. In considering the additional scripture accepted by Latter-day Saints, we might ask: Were those early Christians who for decades had access only to the primitive Gospel of Mark (generally considered the first of the New Testament Gospels to be written)—were they offended to receive the more detailed accounts set forth later by Matthew and Luke, to say nothing of the unprecedented passages and revelatory emphasis offered later yet by John? Surely, they must have rejoiced that ever more convincing evidence of the divinity of Christ kept coming. And so do we rejoice.

Please do not misunderstand. We love and revere the Bible, as Elder M. Russell Ballard taught so clearly from this pulpit just one year ago.<sup>6</sup> The Bible is the word of God. It is always identified first in our canon, our “standard works.” Indeed, it was a divinely ordained encounter with the fifth verse of the first chapter of the book of James that led Joseph Smith to his vision of the Father and the Son, which gave birth to the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in our time. But even then, Joseph knew the Bible alone could not be the answer to all the religious questions he and others like him had. As he said in his own words, the ministers of his community were contending—sometimes angrily—over their doctrines. “Priest [was] contending against priest, and convert [was contending] against convert ... in a strife of words and a contest about opinions,” he said. About the only thing these contending religions had in common was, ironically, a belief in the Bible, but, as Joseph wrote, “the teachers of religion of the different sects understood the same passages of scripture so differently as to destroy all confidence in settling the question [regarding which church was true] by an appeal to the Bible.”<sup>7</sup> Clearly the Bible, so frequently described at that time as “common ground,” was nothing of the kind—unfortunately it was a

battleground.

Thus one of the great purposes of continuing revelation through living prophets is to declare to the world through additional witnesses that the Bible is true. “This is written,” an ancient prophet said, speaking of the Book of Mormon, “for the intent that ye may believe that,” speaking of the Bible. 8 In one of the earliest revelations received by Joseph Smith, the Lord said, “Behold, I do not bring [the Book of Mormon forth] to destroy [the Bible] but to build it up.” 9

One other point needs to be made. Since it is clear that there were Christians long before there was a New Testament or even an accumulation of the sayings of Jesus, it cannot therefore be maintained that the Bible is what makes one a Christian. In the words of esteemed New Testament scholar N. T. Wright, “The risen Jesus, at the end of Matthew’s Gospel, does not say, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth is given to the books you are all going to write,’ but [rather] ‘All authority in heaven and on earth is given to me.’ ” 10 In other words, “Scripture itself points ... away from itself and to the fact that final and true authority belongs to God himself.” 11 So the scriptures are not the ultimate source of knowledge for Latter-day Saints. They are manifestations of the ultimate source. The ultimate source of knowledge and authority for a Latter-day Saint is the living God. The communication of those gifts comes from God as living, vibrant, divine revelation. 12

...“We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.” 1

In declaring new scripture and continuing revelation, we pray we will never be arrogant or insensitive. But after a sacred vision in a now sacred grove answered in the affirmative the question “Does God exist?” what Joseph Smith and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints force us to face is the next interrogative, which necessarily follows: “Does He speak?” We bring the good news that He does and that He has. With a love and affection born of our Christianity, we invite all to inquire into the wonder of what God has said since biblical times and is saying even now.

In a sense Joseph Smith and his prophetic successors in this Church answer the challenge Ralph Waldo Emerson put to the students of the Harvard Divinity School 170 years ago this coming summer. To that group of the Protestant best and brightest, the great sage of Concord pled

that they teach “that God is, not was; that **He speaketh, not spake.**” 15 I testify that the heavens are open. I testify that Joseph Smith was and is a prophet of God, that the Book of Mormon is truly another testament of Jesus Christ. I testify that Thomas S. Monson is God’s prophet, a modern apostle with the keys of the kingdom in his hands, a man upon whom I personally have seen the mantle fall. I testify that the presence of such authorized, prophetic voices and ongoing canonized revelations have been at the heart of the Christian message whenever the authorized ministry of Christ has been on the earth. I testify that such a ministry is on the earth again, and it is found in this, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

In our heartfelt devotion to Jesus of Nazareth as the very Son of God, the Savior of the world, we invite all to examine what we have received of Him, to join with us, drinking deeply at the “well of water springing up into everlasting life,” 16 these constantly flowing reminders that God lives, that He loves us, and that He speaks. I express the deepest personal thanks that His works never end and His “words ... never cease.” I bear witness of such divine loving attention and the recording of it, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.”

1. For an introductory discussion on this topic, see Stephen E. Robinson, *Are Mormons Christians?* (1991), 46. The issue of canon is discussed on pages 45–56. Canon is defined as “an authoritative list of books accepted as Holy Scripture” (Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed. [2003], “canon”).
2. See Bruce M. Metzger, *Manuscripts of the Greek Bible: An Introduction to Greek Paleography* (1981), 54–55.
3. See Deuteronomy 4:2, for example.
4. Moses 1:4.
5. Lee M. McDonald, *The Formation of the Christian Biblical Canon*, rev. ed. (1995), 255–56.
6. See “The Miracle of the Holy Bible,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2007, 80–82.
7. Joseph Smith—History 1:6, 12.
8. Mormon 7:9; emphasis added.
9. D&C 10:52; see also D&C 20:11.
10. N. T. Wright, *The Last Word: Beyond the Bible Wars to a New Understanding of the Authority of Scripture* (2005), xi.
11. Wright, *The Last Word*, 24.
12. For a full essay on this subject, see Dallin H. Oaks, “Scripture

Reading and Revelation,” Ensign, Jan. 1995, 6–9.

13. 1 Kings 18:27.

14. Articles of Faith 1:9.

15. “An Address,” The Complete Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson (1929), 45.

16. John 4:14.

(Elder Jeffery R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “My Words Never Cease”, April 2008 General Conference, video and full text at <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2008/04/my-words-never-cess?lang=eng>)

-see also

[http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism\\_and\\_the\\_Bible/Completeness](http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism_and_the_Bible/Completeness)

-see also

[http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism\\_and\\_the\\_Bible/Insufficient](http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism_and_the_Bible/Insufficient)

-see also

[http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism\\_and\\_the\\_Bible/Open\\_canon\\_vs.\\_closed\\_canon](http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism_and_the_Bible/Open_canon_vs._closed_canon)

-also, further scripture study:

Prophets

Jacob 4:4, 6

Mosiah 8:13–18

Acts 10:34–43

Amos 3:7

Dispensations

D&C 136:36–38

Moses 5:4–12, 55–59

Moses 8:19–30

Bible Dictionary, “Dispensations”

Apostacy:

1 Nephi 13

2 Nephi 26:20–21

2 Nephi 28

4 Nephi 1:27

D&C 86:1–3

Matthew 24:9–11

Mark 12:1–9

Acts 3:19–21

Acts 20:28–30

Galatians 1:6–9

2 Thessalonians 2:1–12 (JST verses 2, 3, 7–9)

1 Timothy 4:1–3

2 Timothy 4:3–4

2 Peter 2:1–2

Amos 8:11–12

Topical Guide, “Apostasy of the Early Christian Church”

True to the Faith, “Apostasy,” pages 13–14

Our Search for Happiness, pages 23–32

Jesus the Christ, chapter 40, “The Long Night of Apostasy”

– • The Church of Jesus Christ is built on the foundation of apostles and prophets (see Ephesians 2:19–20; 4:11–14). These leaders have divine priesthood authority. Through revelation they direct the affairs of the Church. They maintain doctrinal purity, authorize the administration of ordinances, and call and confer upon others the priesthood authority.

• People rejected and killed Jesus Christ and the Apostles (see Matthew 24:9; 1 Nephi 11:32–34; 2 Nephi 27:5). With the death of the Apostles, the presiding priesthood authority was absent from the Church.

Consequently, there was no longer authority to confer the Holy Ghost or perform other saving ordinances. Revelation ceased, and doctrine became corrupted.

• Even before the death of the Apostles, many conflicts concerning doctrine arose. The Roman Empire, which at first had persecuted the Christians, later adopted Christianity. Important religious questions were settled by councils. The simple doctrines and ordinances taught by the Savior were debated and changed to conform to worldly philosophies (see Isaiah 24:5). They physically changed the scriptures, removing plain and precious doctrines from them (1 Nephi 13:26–40). They created creeds, or statements of belief, based on false and changed doctrine (see Joseph Smith—History 1:19). Because of pride, some aspired to positions of influence (see 3 John 1:9–10). People accepted these false ideas and gave honor to false teachers who taught pleasing doctrines rather than divine truth (see 2 Timothy 4:3–4).

• Throughout history, many people have sincerely believed false creeds and doctrines. They have worshiped according to the light they possessed and have received answers to their prayers. Yet they are “kept from the truth because they know not where to find it” (D&C 123:12).

• Therefore, a restoration, not a reformation, was required. Priesthood authority did not continue in an unbroken line of succession from the Apostle Peter. To reform is to change what already exists; to restore is to

bring back something in its original form. Thus, restoration of priesthood authority through divine messengers was the only possible way to overcome the Great Apostasy. (<https://www.lds.org/manual/preach-my-gospel-a-guide-to-missionary-service/lesson-1-the-message-of-the-restoration-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng>)

The Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ

2 Nephi 3

D&C 112:30

Ephesians 1:10

Ephesians 4:5

James 1:5

Brochure, The Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith

The Book of Mormon:

Title page of the Book of Mormon

Introduction to the Book of Mormon, paragraphs 1–7

D&C 1:17–23

D&C 20:5–12

Joseph Smith—History 1:27–64

The power of prayer to know whether all of this is true, and what the implications of such are:

Alma 5:45–46

D&C 8:2–3

John 14:26

Introduction to the Book of Mormon, paragraphs 8–9

## Know, Not Just Believe

People who "Know" the gospel is true (not just believe), and how they came to know.

-Alma 5:45

-NT: Jesus said ye shall KNOW (not just believe) the truth, and the truth shall set you free.

-We have heard many prophets declare they know God with a sure witness more powerful than even that of the sense (for some of those quotes see my Special Witnesses document in the Restoration book). Joseph Smith taught that these blessings are available for all church members, not just the leaders.

-see Truman Madsen lectures on revelation, sources of knowledge, etc.

-Jesus said that he is full of grace and truth. Many have expounded on his grace, but do they allow his truth? The restoration brings much truth which the world of Christendom at large will not receive! They remain with the Greeks and philosophers, floundering for truth, rejecting it when it is right in front of them, to save face in front of their friends and scholarly peers. They mix scriptures with the philosophies of men. Jesus wants to tell us of our pre-mortal life, of our exaltatory potential, and of the history and origins of God himself, the character of God, what God does, where he is, but will they hear it? No they will not.

-It is lying to say you know when you don't actually know. But it's equally lying to say that you don't know when you really do.

-Only the Holy Ghost can give perfect knowledge.

-If you have to ask some trusted or wise friend, even an ecclesiastical leader such as your bishop the question of whether you have a testimony, you don't have a testimony. Go work on that.

## Oh How We Know by Truman G Madsen – Lecture Highlights

The way that a person can know if another person is a prophet is by becoming a prophet himself does a Smith said that God will reveal to any saint as soon as he's ready

We can catch glimpses of pre mortality

Even secular scholars recognize something of a collective conscience even ordinary people can have an understanding of the human race and an appreciation for the great

Discovery of the Gospel is recovery it is a reawakening.  
One of the prophets spoke of learning the gospel as simply being learning to trust Jesus Christ that same Jesus Christ who are spirits loved and heard before we came to this earth

In the mountains the air is thinner and the veil is thinner

Some people say they're afraid to pray because they won't get an answer but often the cases that they're afraid to pray because they're afraid they will get an answer and they already have an idea of what that answer will be

Moses came down from Mount Sinai and invited the people to all come up with him people said no thank you that sort of thing is for crazy people prophets we're not like that. Then the people made idols.

Jesus said my sheep hear my voice and know me well we can't no the voice of a Shepherd that we've never heard before we know his voice because we have heard him before and pre mortality

Brigham Young said testimony is more often found on one's feet than one's knees by the cement that when we're engaging in the work of God we know better that we know

One man prayed to God to know if the Book of Mormon was true and interrupted himself halfway through the prayer and said nevermind I already know.

Some have been able to merely touch or look at the Book of Mormon and know that it is true by the aura and warmth it sends.

When investigators read the book of Mormon they have many aha moments where they're hearing things that they knew deep down we're already true things that they already recognized as truth things that were familiar to them and now being brought to them in a fresh new way

People have more condemnation when there is a living prophet then pass profits we are partially accountable to pass profits but we're completely accountable to living Prophets.

After one of the very spiritual experiences out of Temple dedication one of the prophets said now that we've been through this it's not so easy for us to get away with sin anymore

The Bible doesn't really present arguments for God what it does is gives witnesses of people who have first-hand experiences with God.

There are many people having spiritual experiences these days. The sense of God originates with God it comes from God.

Certain sentiments certain faces certain music can have a familiar ring like we've always known it that is because we have in pre mortality.

We are on Earth on purpose but we can get celestial homesickness the feeling that we are a stranger on this Earth that our truest home is a better place.

## Testimony: Bearing the Weight

Some speak of a burden relieved from them when they leave the church. To an extent, this is true. It is true in the same way that a person with an important job has less on his plate when he quits his job. But then what is the purpose of the life of that man? Some speak of having a hard time finding themselves. Some prophets have said that it is only when we lose ourselves in service to others that we can find ourselves, because there will be a lot more of our selves to find when we become great through service.

Testimony is to say these are the formulas I use to calculate the trajectory of my life, to guide all choices, and to process a firm belief that they are universally true. That these formulas, if used by all, would lead to maximum human progress, happiness, and salvation.

Bearing testimony is also a weight, a burden, which you have carried day to day, and you come to report that it's worth it. A religious life often appears and is difficult. We stand to say it is the best way by every measurement. The main place and time you hear testimony is when no one is looking and no one is listening but God himself. A testimony is a character trait. It is how you operate.

There is a common Egyptian depiction of a king on a throne with a crown so large he requires a pole to help hold it up. This suggests, as the D&C puts it, an 'eternal weight of glory'. The D&C warns that there are but few who are willing to bear that weight, and that only those who live the celestial law can gain the celestial glory.

Elder Holland reportedly responded, when asked by someone, 'are you willing to give your life for the Lord?' by saying, 'I thought that is what I was doing.' This suggests that rather than bold words and final stands, what really matters are the choices we make every day. Living for something is often harder than dying for it. Like Naaman told to do a small thing, so must we muster the strength to obey God when there is little public recognition or status symbols and circles for doing so. Don't be silly and stand at church and say, 'I would be ungrateful if I didn't stand to bear my testimony today.' No, the reality is that you would be ungrateful if you didn't stand to bear your testimony daily in the ways that really count. Don't get up to say, 'it's been a long time since I've born my testimony.' Goodness sakes, let's hope not!

## Some Testimony Q&A

### How do we get a testimony?

We do like Elder Perry said in letting God lead us like a horse with a bridle in obedience, and we also do like another General Authority taught in experimenting on the word to see if it is true.

### How do we experiment upon the word?

By doing what Jesus says and seeing what the result is. Merely not doing what Jesus says and getting a negative result isn't sufficient for a knowledge of the blessings that come from obeying Jesus.

### Why do we obey like a horse in a bridle?

It's part of the experiment upon the word. It's trying to do what Jesus says and seeing what the result is.

### Do we need to sin or transgress in order to gain knowledge?

Adam didn't sin, he transgressed. Modern prophets have clarified such.

### So why did Jesus do the Atonement?

To overcome the effects of not only sin, but transgression. To overcome what happened in the Garden of Eden as well as what happened after it. Jesus wouldn't have been able to overcome transgression we call the fall without being perfect, without having transgressed himself. Now we answer a former question, who knows more about sin, the sinner, or Jesus? Jesus. Only he knows the level of resistance required to not sin or transgress. Hence, we can learn of the truth in other methods than sin or transgression, and the methods of experimenting and obeying to get a testimony we learn are two sides of the same coin we use to purchase eternal life.

### Are we to trust General Conference?

Joseph Smith said God will never allow the President of the Church or the majority of the 12 Apostles to lead us astray.

Also keep in mind that there are several aspects to every answer, and some talks emphasize one aspect more than another. Elder Oaks taught that in determining doctrine we are to not just look at one scripture (\*or one modern prophet's words I would add), but we must look at all of them to get an understanding.

### How shall I compare what was said in the Church versus what is said now?

Several discourses on the role of prophet explain that the word of the Lord from the current Prophets and Apostles are what we need more than that of the old ones. For example, an issue could rise in 1950, then the

Saints reject the warning from the prophet on that subject, and hence in year 2000 the Prophets speak on other topics, the day of warning having passed on the 1950 subject, the Saints left to fend for themselves.

So there is such a thing as a day of warning passing? Don't the prophets always warn until the end on every issue?

No. Consider this example: There came a point when Noah was loading up the ark that there was no more coming on the ark. Elder Perry said, “Sin is intensely habit-forming and sometimes moves men to the tragic point of no return.” Some wonder why prophets aren't as outspoken on issues such as socialism or food storage etc. as they once were.

Remember that Alma said when people reject a message, they get less message. Perhaps the brethren are dumbing it down for us as much as they can in a last-ditch effort to get us to do something.

Topics continue to be taught that are of importance, but may not be emphasized as much as they were in the past. For instance, President Benson spoke frequently against socialism when he was the prophet. Today, the Church still teaches against socialism and has in its archive's discourses enumerating socialism as the work of the devil, but apparently other issues are at the forefront of Jesus Christ's mind today, for he is instructing his prophets to emphasize other things. Perhaps the people of the world today are generally with less faith, and the prophets are working on building up their faith in Jesus Christ so they can get to the point someday where they can endure more speeches against socialism etc. without getting offended and leaving the Church. Milk before meat as the church now grows to a global organization, and is, in reality, still in its infancy in most places in which it is found.

## How to Discern Truth: Taste the Fruits of the Spirit

When it comes to testimony and knowing what is true, the holy spirit is the guide.

Here is a journal account from myself, I will not discuss which topic this prayer was about, but with boldness I describe the feelings I recorded about the prayer. Suffice the description of the substance of the prayer being something pertaining to how to help raise children. I use boldness because you need real examples from your day; you can't just read about things people went through 100 or 1000 years ago, you must know that faith lives. That God lives. That is my witness to you.

I felt a powerful peace as I prayed about \_\_\_\_\_. I felt the calm and quiet of the Son of Righteousness. I had great calm, and stillness, and power over my senses. The thought came to me, "did I not speak peace to your soul? What greater witness can you have than this?" It wasn't mere calm, it was peace. It was an ease of soul, a comfort that all is well. It felt like a peace of all accounts being settled, and the feeling of the Lords support in my efforts. I had these general feelings of the presence of the Lord. I think this was because the \_\_\_\_\_ operation is for the sake of [helping] children, which thing pleases the Lord....

I would call this an outpouring of the spirit, but that would seem like a flood; it didn't feel like a flood, it rather felt like a calm river. It was not a yelling but a still smallness, though it penetrated to the very core. I was not even fully aware of it at first until I reflected, then I knew very keenly that something out of the normal was occurring, and that it was precious beyond measure.

This reminds me of one of the occasions when I invited someone to be baptized on my mission. She accepted the invitation, and it felt like a marble was in my chest or stomach, a sort of heated object, but seemingly concentrated, not overwhelming in a wild sense, but overwhelming in a sense of perfect stillness. It did not overpower my senses, it brought all of my senses into order and subjection.

Perhaps I'll relate another item on this topic somewhat related. When I prayed to know if I should marry my spouse, I felt not a "you must", but

I felt a “this would be a very very good thing”. It also wasn’t so overpowering as to remove my agency; God comforted me to the extent to know that it was a thing he would be fully vested in with me in. A full partner, that His spirit would be allowed to be involved fully. Needless to say, I didn’t have to stew over this decision for months and years on end. If it’s good for the Lord, it’s good for me.

A somewhat related tangent, the prophets have taught us to look for “a” right spouse, rather than “the” right spouse, because there is no such thing as “the” right spouse. The human race is compatible with each other, it’s no so fragile as all that when they are living the plan of their creator, the Man of Righteousness, Heavenly Father. So it is with many aspects of life, there doesn’t have to be a needle in a hay stack, the situations we are presented can work wonderfully, and eternally. This life is about building more so than about finding. About learning more so than downloading. More about experience than gifts. More about trying than perfection. Perfection is a serious commandment that we do not take lightly, but we recognize that a part of perfection for us is obeying the law of repentance. Indeed, the human race is perfect when it repents of its mistakes. As for the Spirit of God, it is the Spirit of Jesus Christ, it is champion of all, and life without it is the most risky voyage in the universe.

## Be One: Celebrating Priesthood for Africans

Highlights of the June 2018 Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Revelation on the Priesthood - Members of African Descent Receiving Temple and Priesthood Blessings

Introductory Note from the editor: I don't know why we had the priesthood ban on Africans, it could have been a generational curse, it could have been something the Lord did to keep the peace until as a society we were ready for the higher laws of equality, I don't know. Either way, we know the Lord is good, and that in the long run, no blessings are withheld from the faithful.

Now for highlights from the program:

The Lord's plan is not equal outcomes for everyone, but equal opportunities for everyone.

The Lord often does not reveal reasons for his commandments.

When Elder Oaks prayed about the reasons being given before the release of the restriction, they did not resonate as true with him.

At the revelation in 1978, the church renounced past leaders' attempts to explain why the restriction had been in place.

We don't seek for all people to be able to enter the temple, for God's blessings there must be obedience to his laws. To let anyone in would be accepting Satan's plan of saving everyone.

The Lord's plan is not equal outcomes for everyone, but equal opportunities for everyone.

Don't focus on the hurt of the past, but the opportunity of the future.

Don't seek to dwell on racism, but move forward.

Joseph Smith taught that a kindred spirit exists in the body of Christ that when one of the members is hurt, that all members hurt, and that when one rejoices, all rejoice.

## Why Children (and Adults) Fall Away from The Church

\*\*\*Disclaimer: Some children just want to leave! This is not meant to incriminate anyone!

The goal here is to get a broad view which can help us all to take steps toward better helping our loved ones (and ourselves) to stay on the good ship Zion. It would be a toxic idea to assume that we know it all and that we have been doing exactly the right thing the whole time. We should all maintain a sense of humility and willingness to improve. It's the normal human experience to require course corrections throughout life, big and small. God understands and has provided a plan for that.



Some say the church is too soft, and tough guys leave due to that with their wives following them, but I think this is rarely the case. The General Conference messages were never meant to tell you everything you should be doing, etc. Those who leave with this as their supposed cause are usually lacking faith for another reason, I would suggest.

1. **LACK OF LOVE:** Dr. Glen Letham (latter-day saint therapist) says most leave the church not due to loss of testimony but due to lack of emotional kindness from their parents. Read about this in his book *Positive Parenting*

2. **MEDIA PROGRAMMING** Many preachers says kids leave due to being regularly preached to by Babylon through Hollywood rock magic etc. being tutored subtly by the media throughout their lives from what parents thought were innocent movies

Violence desensitizing to spirit  
Hidden progressive teachings

3. **PROGRESSIVE CHURCH MOVEMENT** The Joseph Smith Foundation Faith Crisis books show a faith crisis due to mass progressive movement in the church to reject fundamental points of our religion

4. NO LIMITS No limits. Elder Holland says 2nd only to love kids need their parents' limits.
5. NO TESTIMONY Didn't teach the gospel. Just perfunctory reading a verse here and there. No personal testimony. No understanding of or appreciation for the Standard Works. Careless attitude toward teachings of the living prophets, church meetings, church callings, etc.
6. LONELINESS Lack of fellowship in the church
7. SCHOOL INDOCTRINATION: overly socializing into Babylonian culture and methods; Godless education in history and science etc. which runs contrary to what is being taught at church at home and in the scriptures.

Additional Resources:

1. A therapist lists these ideas for principles of discipline in the LDS Living Magazine <http://www.ldsliving.com/14-Tips-for-Disciplining-Children/s/64602>
  1. Hierarchy exists in the classroom. Exercise your authority.
  2. Co-teachers be on the same page & consistent
  3. Age appropriate rules. Ensure they know them.
  4. Punishments related to infractions, not random or “go to” punishments.
  5. Age 1-10 timeouts can be effective. When kids are in timeout, don't respond to their tantrums.
  6. No physical punishment (including spanking), it instills obedience by fear, there are better ways.
  7. Don't yell. We want them to learn from our example.
  8. Criticize behavior not character “Use a quiet voice.” not “You are a loud-mouthed brat.”
  9. Positive reinforcement works better than Negative reinforcement by 5x. Praise them for following rules. Establish a reward system to motivate obedience.
  10. Parent Timeout – if you lose it, so will they.
  11. Chose your battles. But once chosen, win. Maintain the hierarchy or the child rules the class.
  12. Be consistent. Don't say “I will let it slide this time,” or “It's easier to not deal with it.” Kids keep a tally of every time you give in and plan future rebellion.

13. Show love. Nothing motivates kids more than knowing you will be proud of them.
2. Randal A Wright, a teacher in the church education system and PhD in social science, has a book on 25 mistakes latter-day saint parents make. These are his basic ideas:
    1. Home environment (that reflects the gospel)
    2. Quality time (and quantity)
    3. The crossroads (be there at critical times)
    4. Family traditions (have them to teach, indoctrinate, & unify)
    5. Children's friends (don't allow them to associate too closely with those who don't share their values)
    6. Peer pressure (teach how to deal with it)
    7. Television (limit exposure, none in bedrooms)
    8. Music (limit access to inappropriate)
    9. Movies (prevent exposure to inappropriate)
    10. Parental example
    11. Expressing love verbally (daily to family members)
    12. Physical affection (give it)
    13. Support (each other's events, games, & activities)
    14. Marriage (build it strong to show how it works)
    15. Family fun (& laughter)
    16. Discipline (be consistent, non-harsh, non-lax)
    17. Worldly heroes (discourage over-involvement)
    18. Teaching correct principles (don't assume church & society will)
    19. Human intimacy (teach the importance and proper role)
    20. Steady dating (prohibit during teen years)
    21. Underage dating (before 16)
    22. Communication (keep the lines open with your children)
    23. Self-worth (build a positive self-image in your children)
    24. Spiritual experiences (take advantage of inspired church-sponsored programs)
    25. Warning signs (recognize)

## Why It's Not Sexist for Woman to Covenant Directly to Man

I don't know why there was a change in the ceremony recently, the best I can figure it's just not what people need to hear right now. I suspect it has to do with everyone being taught so much false feminist philosophies that the people simply can't handle the truth anymore. But its not my place to say, God can decide what to and not include in his endowment.

But let me say this which I heard recently:

Adam was told not to eat the fruit before Eve even comes on scene. So it must have been Adam who told her not to do it.

She does it.

Adam then falls to save her.

Adam is a type of Christ, and Eve is a type of the church or covenant people of God.

Therefore, it is no shame for woman to covenant to follow man as man follows God.

Should one person want to be another? Is Christ less than Heavenly Father? No and no. Therefore, woman should not want to be man. As we live right, all accounts are settled, we are all blessed equally in exalted glory.

## For those Uncomfortable with Recent Temple Changes

Some are upset that there have been changes to temple ordinances. I don't have an issue with these, and believe the prophet is following instruction from the Lord which reflects the ability of the people to receive truth. I do believe in the patriarchal order, but think that the world, with how twisted it is right now, can't really understand it. The Lord in mercy removes truth as we aren't prepared for it. He teaches us line upon line according to our ability to receive.

Some say that no "official revelation" came to codify temple changes. I don't know that we need to extend the D&C every time a revelation comes to the prophet however.

Some say that Joseph Smith gave specific instruction that the endowment was never to be changed. I feel that despite the recent changes (not only in recent years but recent decades), the meaning and intent of the ceremonies remain essentially the same. I do not feel that the endowment is the end all be all ceremony that is designed to teach us every single thing pertaining to salvation in the kingdom of God.

Some suggest that these changes will result in a great divide in the church when the Lord restores the proper order of things, and that those on the right side of this divide will be those who travel to the New Jerusalem, which will be the only place on earth not warring with each other in the forthcoming major end time wars.

## They've Still Got It! Evidences that the Brethren Are Still Getting Revelation to Lead The Church

Founding Fathers appeared in the St. George temple to request their work done. Some claim that by this time the church had fallen, this shows it had not fallen.

Christ's appearance to Lorenzo Snow in the temple.

Christ's appearance to Russell M Nelson (The Wendy Nelson makes it clear – she speaks of needing to leave the room as her husband has a shocking interview occupying several hours, etc. She says this happens more than once.

They accused Joseph Smith of not getting enough revelation in his day too.

D&C says the word of the Lord to this generation comes to us through Joseph Smith. That's the bulk of doctrine.

President Hinckley taught this too, that's where we look to for how to run things by and large.

The Church is 16 million strong and doing amazing missionary work around the world bringing souls to Christ. Sure we could do better and must do better if we are to herald in mighty future prophecy of Zion and restoring celestial law, but we do have something going here, and it is the work of the Lord.

President Packer said he saw Christ like Joseph Smith. He quoted Joseph's words of having seen Christ, and directly afterwards said "his words are my words".

This could suggest that they still get visitations but that such aren't spoken of widely:

“Prior to teaching the endowment, Joseph Smith warned the Saints: “Let us be faithful and silent, brethren, and if God gives you a manifestation, keep it to yourselves.”

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, edited by Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1938), 91.

Of this remark, Elder Dallin H. Oaks wrote:

“By and large, Latter-day Saints observe this direction. They do not speak publicly of their most sacred experiences. They seldom mention miracles in bearing their testimonies, and they rarely preach from the pulpit about signs that the gospel is true. They usually affirm their testimony of the truthfulness of the restored gospel by asserting the conclusion, not by giving details on how it was obtained.” Dallin H. Oaks, *The Lord’s Way* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Co., 1991), 96

## Special Witnesses: Latter-day Prophets Know Jesus Christ

In a book by sister Nelson “The Heavens are Open”, she speaks of her husband (President Russel M Nelson) signaling to her to exit the room, and the Lord appearing to him.

“Visions do happen. Voices are heard from beyond the veil. I know this. But these experiences are exceptional... Most of the revelation that comes to leaders and members of the Church comes by the still, small voice or by a feeling rather than by a vision or a voice that speaks specific words we can hear.” (Elder Dallin H. Oaks, Ensign, Mar. 1997, p.14.)

“I know, with a testimony more powerful than sight, that as the Lord declared, ‘The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth [from the Prophet Joseph Smith through his successors down to the present], and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth.’” (President Harold B. Lee, Conference Report, Oct. 1972, p.20)

“After all the years that I have lived and taught and served, after the millions of miles I have traveled around the world, with all that I have experienced, there is one great truth that I would share. That is my witness of the Savior Jesus Christ.

Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon recorded the following after a sacred experience:

“And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives! “For we saw him” (D&C 76:22–23). **Their words are my words.** I believe and I am sure that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that He lives. He is the Only Begotten of the Father, and “by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God” (D&C 76:24). I bear my witness that the Savior lives. I know the Lord. I am His witness. I know of His great sacrifice and eternal love for all of Heavenly Father’s children. I bear my special witness in all humility but with absolute certainty, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.” (President Boyd K. Packer, Conference Report, Apr. 2014. see <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/04/the-witness?lang=eng>)

“I want it absolutely clear when I stand before the judgment bar of God that I declared to the world ... that the Book of Mormon is true... As one of a thousand elements of my own testimony of the divinity of the Book of Mormon, I submit this as yet one more evidence of its truthfulness. In this their greatest—and last—hour of need, I ask you: would these men blaspheme before God by continuing to fix their lives, their honor, and their own search for eternal salvation on a book (and by implication a church and a ministry) they had fictitiously created out of whole cloth? Never mind that their wives are about to be widows and their children fatherless. Never mind that their little band of followers will yet be “houseless, friendless and homeless” and that their children will leave footprints of blood across frozen rivers and an untamed prairie floor. 9 Never mind that legions will die and other legions live declaring in the four quarters of this earth that they know the Book of Mormon and the Church which espouses it to be true. Disregard all of that, and tell me whether in this hour of death these two men would enter the presence of their Eternal Judge quoting from and finding solace in a book which, if not the very word of God, would brand them as imposters and charlatans until the end of time? They would not do that! They were willing to die rather than deny the divine origin and the eternal truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. For 179 years this book has been examined and attacked, denied and deconstructed, targeted and torn apart like perhaps no other book in modern religious history—perhaps like no other book in any religious history. And still it stands... I testify that one cannot come to full faith in this latter-day work—and thereby find the fullest measure of peace and comfort in these, our times—until he or she embraces the divinity of the Book of Mormon and the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom it testifies.” (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “Safety for the Soul”, Conference Report Oct. 2009, see <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2009/10/safety-for-the-soul?lang=eng>)

-“I know by personal revelation from the Holy Spirit to my soul that Jesus is the Lord; that he brought life and immortality to light through the gospel; and that he has restored in this day the fullness of his everlasting truth, so that we with the ancients can become inheritors of his presence in eternity.” (Elder Bruce R. McConkie, “The Testimony of Jesus”, Conference Report, Apr. 1972, see <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1972/04/the-testimony-of-jesus?lang=eng#watch=video>)

-My stake President Brad Bylund at a conference said he was at a training with President Dallin Oaks where Oaks said I know Christ, I know his face, I have heard his voice.

-“I know He (Jesus Christ) lives. I know His voice.” (2015 April General Conference, Elder Quinton L Cook)

-“I know as surely as I live that the resurrected Savior lives” (President Henry B. Eyring, 2014 Christmas devotional)

## The Only True Church – Prophet Quotes

Here I demonstrate that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only true church.

“To possess a testimony of Jesus is to know that the Church, which He established in the meridian of time and restored in modern times is, as the Lord has declared, “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth.” (D&C 1:30.) (Benson Teachings Ch. 6 <https://www.lds.org/manual/teachings-of-presidents-of-the-church-ezra-taft-benson/chapter-6-jesus-christ-our-savior-and-redeemer?lang=eng>)



“We invite all men everywhere to read the Book of Mormon, to ponder in their hearts the message it contains, and then to ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ if the book is true. Those who pursue this course and ask in faith will gain a testimony of its truth and divinity by the power of the Holy Ghost. (See Moroni 10:3–5.) Those who gain this divine witness from the Holy Spirit will also come to know by the same power that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world, that Joseph Smith is His

revelator and prophet in these last days, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Lord’s kingdom once again established on the earth, preparatory to the Second Coming of the Messiah.” (The Book of Mormon, Introduction page)

“It is our firm conviction that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is, as the revelations state, “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth.” (D&C 1:30). . . . We did not invent the doctrine of the only true church. It came from the Lord. Whatever perception others have of us, however presumptuous we appear to be, whatever criticism is directed to us, we must teach it to all who will listen.

“If we can stand without shame, without hesitancy, without embarrassment, without reservation to bear witness that the gospel has been restored, that there are prophets and Apostles upon the earth, that the truth is available for all mankind, the Lord’s Spirit will be with us. And that assurance can be affirmed to others. Of this I bear witness in the

name of Jesus Christ, amen.” (Elder Boyd K. Packer, “The Only True Church”, Conference Report, Oct. 1985 <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1985/10/the-only-true-church?lang=eng> )

“The Church of Jesus Christ, nicknamed Mormon, is the only true and living church which is fully recognized by God....Most of the world disbelieves it, ministers attempt to disprove it, intellectuals think to rationalize it out of existence, but when all the people of the world are dead, and the ministers and priests are ashes, and the high trained are maundering in their graves, the truth will go forward, the Church will continue triumphant and the gospel will still be true.” (President Spencer W. Kimball, Church News, Sep. 10, 1977, p.3)

-see also this man’s search for truth Wilford Woodruff realizing there was an apostasy and only one true Church on earth today. see <https://www.lds.org/media-library/video/2010-07-02-a-search-for-truth?lang=eng>

-see also President Packer on Priesthood in the home via the authority of the restored Priesthood

<https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-training/2012/01/priesthood-power-in-the-home?lang=eng&query=only+true+church>

-“Nothing matters in time or eternity like the gospel of Jesus Christ [and] the saving ordinances of the only true Church on the face of the earth. And God turns its future over to a bunch of 19-year-olds. There is no precedent for it on the face of the earth.” (Elder Jeffery R. Holland, Elder Holland Testifies of Gospel in Sierra Leone; Contributed By Heather Whittle Wrigley, Church News and Events 24 FEBRUARY 2012 <https://www.lds.org/church/news/elder-holland-testifies-of-gospel-in-sierra-leone?lang=eng&query=only+true+church>)

-“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth” (D&C 1:30).

## Importance of The Standard Works & Firsthand Accounts

The problem I have with other prophets stating that another prophet taught something is that this is open to error, and that whatever they teach this way is hearsay rather than revelation to them.

When they say that Joseph taught something, did they here it directly or did another colleague tell it to them? Also, since it wasn't revealed to the church by the first prophet, was it even revelation or mere speculation? Hearing something second hand can never be repeated in a "thus saith the Lord" way, and so any prophet teaching this way is not "acting as a prophet" the way Joseph said they should.

We have known Brigham Young to be wrong and perhaps this is why.

Therefore, I will stand by scriptural doctrines only and discard others as having inherent error.

## Joseph Smith against Blindly Following Prophets

“President Joseph Smith read the 14th chapter of Ezekiel—said the Lord had declared by the Prophet, that the people should each one stand for himself, and depend on no man or men in that state of corruption of the Jewish church—that righteous persons could only deliver their own souls—applied it to the present state of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—said if the people departed from the Lord, they must fall—that they were depending on the Prophet, hence were darkened in their minds, in consequence of neglecting the duties devolving upon themselves. . . .”

History of the Church, by Joseph Smith, Vol. 5, p. 19. Address of the Prophet to the Relief Society, reported by Eliza R. Snow Smith

## Joseph Smith on Holding Leaders Accountable

“It is my object to ascertain the standing of the first presidency, (as I have been instructed) I present myself for trial, I shall next present my councillors for trial. . . .

“Are you satisfied with the first presidency, so far as I am concerned, or will you choose another? If I have done any thing to injure my character in the sight of men & angels — or men & women, come forward tell of it & if not ever after hold your peace.”

Joseph Smith, “President Joseph Smith’s Journal,” Journal, 4 vols., Dec. 1842–June 1844, p. 50-51.

## On Fallibility & Constraints of Prophets

Q: Should we follow the prophet?

Yes. He has authority, and teaches the gospel based on the scriptures. He sees the future and warns us of it. He receives new revelations from Christ.

Q: What if a prophet contradicts the standard works?

Usually they aren't, but in the rare case that they do, dismiss that. Remember they can receive new revelation, which can be needed for present circumstances along the lines of changing policy.

Q: Can we have a different opinion than the prophet?

Yes, if it doesn't contradict the standard works. The standard works are direct revelation from God.

Q: Should we take prophets at their word?

No, if it doesn't sit well with you. Brigham Young and others taught that we should receive our own witness of what they are teaching. Just because what they are teaching may be counsel not specifically mentioned in the standard works doesn't mean it isn't true. Go, and get a witness for yourself. But know that Gods ways are higher than our ways, and it wouldn't be surprising if when God reveals his standards, that it offends lots of people. Our society is millions of miles away from the society of heaven, and the culture shock can be devastating. Become familiar with the words of those who are familiar with the Lord. Read the word of the Lord. Do all you can to join Gods society rather than the society of the world.

Q: How can we measure what the prophet does?

Ask "show me the revelation." This is the key. If there is some change etc., we need a revelation.

Q: How do we know that we aren't just relying on our personal logic when we claim a unique understanding of scripture which may differ from opinions of General Authorities?

Surely our study of the scriptures must be through before we go around saying we know it all. Even then it is dangerous, but we do need to be spiritually mature, and be taught by Christ. This is a fine line, but we cannot relinquish our minds. God put us on this earth to think.

Q: Does the prophet teach highest truth, or what the people need to hear?

Moses brought the higher law, the people couldn't handle it, so he brought down a lower law, the ten commandments and Aaronic priesthood rather than the Melchizedek priesthood.

Sometimes people are not ready for the whole truth, and giving them more than they can handle can even be detrimental. This isn't hard to understand for those who are parents.

Alma teaches that preachers are limited in what they can say to people, based on what they are willing to receive. He says that those willing to receive more get more, and those who aren't willing to receive more, it is taken from them what they have, until they have nothing. President Uchtdorf taught that this can be like a cloudy night sky, where we can no longer see the stars.

Joseph Smith said that whenever he tries to teach new things, people fall to pieces like glass.

It seems the job of a prophet is to bring people to the next level. Even when there is more to go, they can't do that until they do the basics first.

Joseph Smith taught that its like a ladder, you must climb one rung at a time. At a stake conference I attended, Elder M Russel Ballard said something to the effect of, "you wonder why we keep teaching the basics. Do the basics, then we will teach you where Kolob is or something like that." Some are ready to go on to the higher truths, but how hardly I suppose, for who among us correctly serves the poor, etc.? Perhaps there are some, but again, it seems the prophets must speak generally to the overall condition of the faith of church members.

As Christ taught in parables, perhaps so do the modern prophets. Perhaps there are higher meanings in their words which we can find. Of course, the Holy Ghost will teach us beyond what the prophet teaches. President Nelson does teach that we must seek to be taught by Christ himself if we are to hope for spiritual protection in these last days.

This being said, we know that prophets must speak the word of the Lord, even if the people will reject them. When the people reject the truth, then comes destruction.

Q: Do we vote on things in the church?

If I understand correctly, the Church used to vote before WW2, which has been removed now and there is only sustaining vote. Joseph Smith supposedly abided by the vote, but today you have to vote in favor and there can be no dissent. Some say this lack of vote violates the law of common consent. Others say that the current system does work in that dissenting votes can be taken to local stake presidents. There is debate

about what should be accepted as a revelation, as the revelations of Joseph Smith were voted upon and thereby ratified and codified as part of the standard works.

I know voting as a pure democracy brings chaos when the constituents are a Babylon-hearted people. Some say that just sustaining something just because you are told to do it is wrong.

Q: Does the church have the keys?

Yes, and this is important. Stay with the church, it has the keys. Just because there are possibly a few things prophets may have done wrong etc. doesn't mean we have lost those keys. God will correct things as he sees fit. If and when God decides to make a great divide in the church putting whatever straight he sees fit, be on the right side of that divide, or you won't be worthy to go to the safety of New Jerusalem.

Q: Which statements of the prophets are doctrines?

Those which are congruent with the standard works. Repeatedly taught also helps.

Joseph Smith said a prophet is a prophet only when acting as such, and that prophets have the right to express their own opinions.

Brigham Young once preached a fiery sermon against some corrupt people in the morning, then returned in the evening to preach another sermon with the opposite view, saying that it was Brigham who preached to them that morning, and not it is the Lord.

Hugh Nibley says the way to know is to find out for yourself in every particular.

Some truth is simply hard to bare.

## Consequences of Rejecting the Prophets, Including Less Access to the Word of God

One reason General conference is different now than it was 20 years ago is because times change, and new needs arise. This is obvious. This is why we even have a church today and not rely on the bible for all our guidance. This is what sets us apart in our faith. But this doctrine focuses on the aspect of consequences for rejecting truth being that we get less of it, as stated by Alma (Alma 12:9-11).

Alma 12:9-11: “9 And now Alma began to expound these things unto him, saying: It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him. 10 And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the lesser portion of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full. 11 And they that will harden their hearts, to them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and then they are taken captive by the devil, and led by his will down to destruction. Now this is what is meant by the chains of hell.”

-Prophets warned against electing FDR and his supporting his policies, but Utah statistics show that the saints ignored this warning, and continued electing him over and over.

-Why don't we hear some of these kinds of talks which Ezra Benson and J Reuben Clark used to give? Has the doctrine of the Church changed? Are the prophets becoming wimpy? God forbid, no! It is the people who have rejected their message, and thus the Lord is not allowing them to say those things anymore. This will be proven by the following quoted cited scripture passages. One way to put it is that God has always tried to be involved with the government of people, but they always, excepting the case of the city of Enoch, reject that invitation.

-To keep the Church together, they are careful about political topics. Apparently, there is interest in growing the church at fundamental levels. The members complain about their speech of this; it's too late to stop the

global conspiracy, now we are trying to be good in the midst of it, leaving that to the Lord. President Harold B. Lee was the one who asked that such talks be not had any more, those anti-communist ones. He had reasons for doing this, not that he condones communism! When President McKay asked the saints to by studying what's going on in this country, NOTHING happened, they did nothing about it! They rejected this entirely (1965). Then the next year (1966) he had a conference talk be given on not being commanded in all things. It seems that for the sake of peace, they are teaching us the milk before the meat. We have shown that we are not ready for the meat, and are only getting the milk. The principals they are teaching are sufficient to direct us against these things, but they are not coming out in the open to speak as much about communism and socialism. The lower law must be kept before the higher law. Recall Moses with the ten commandments. He had the higher law, and was rejected, finding the people not ready for it, so he literally threw down those and went back to get the lower law, and such is what he gave them. It's like raising a family, you start the children out with general principals, so they don't run away. Then when they get stronger, they can handle the truth better. (For more info along these lines, quotes, etc., see "Two Churches Only" vol. 1 by Christian Markham at <http://www.twochurchesonly.com>)

– “Some Book of Mormon prophets knew of the final desolate end of their nations, but they still fought on, and they saved some souls including their own by so doing. For, after all, the purpose of life is to prove ourselves, and the final victory will be for freedom. But many of the prophecies referring to America's preservation are conditional. That is, if we do our duty we can be preserved, and if not then we shall be destroyed. This means that a good deal of the responsibility lies with the priesthood of this Church as to what happens to America and as to how much tragedy can be avoided if we do act now. And now as to the last neutralizer that the devil uses most effectively—it is simply this: “Don't do anything in the fight for freedom until the Church sets up its own specific program to save the Constitution.” This brings us right back to the scripture I opened with today — to those slothful servants who will not do anything until they are “compelled in all things.” Maybe the Lord will never set up a specific church program for the purpose of saving the Constitution. Perhaps if he set one up at this time it might split the Church asunder, and perhaps he does not want that to happen yet for not all the wheat and tares are fully ripe.

“The Prophet Joseph Smith declared it will be the elders of Israel who will step forward to help save the Constitution, not the Church. And have we elders been warned? Yes, we have. And have we elders been given the guide lines? Yes indeed, we have. And besides, if the Church should ever inaugurate a program, who do you think would be in the forefront to get it moving? It would not be those who were sitting on the sidelines prior to that time or those who were appeasing the enemy. It would be those choice spirits who, not waiting to be “commanded in all things,” used their own free will, the counsel of the prophets and the Spirit of the Lord as guidelines and who entered the battle “in a good cause” and brought to pass much righteousness in freedom’s cause.... Brethren, if we had done our homework and were faithful, we could step forward at this time and help save this country. The fact that most of us are unprepared to do it is an indictment we will have to bear. The longer we wait, the heavier the chains, the deeper the blood, the more the persecution and the less we can carry out our God-given mandate and world-wide mission. The war in heaven is raging on earth today. Are you being neutralized in the battle?” (Ezra Taft Benson, Not Commanded in All Things, General Conference April 1965 (For more info along these lines, quotes, etc., see “Two Churches Only” vol. 1 by Christian Markham at <http://www.twochurchesonly.com>))

-“Church members are at perfect liberty to act according to their own consciences in the matter of safeguarding our way of life. They are, of course, encouraged to honor the highest standards of the gospel and to work to preserve their own freedoms. They are free to participate in non-church meetings that are held to warn people of the threat of Communism or any other theory or principle that will deprive us of our free agency or individual liberties vouchsafed by the Constitution of the United States. The Church, out of respect for the rights of all its members to have their political views and loyalties, must maintain the strictest possible neutrality. We have no intention of trying to interfere with the fullest and freest exercise of the political franchise of our members under and within our Constitution, which the Lord declared he established “by the hands of wise men whom [he] raised up unto this very purpose” (D&C 101:80) and which, as to the principles thereof, the Prophet Joseph Smith, dedicating the Kirtland Temple, prayed should be “established forever.” (D&C 109:54.) The Church does not yield any of its devotion to or convictions about safeguarding the American principles and the establishments of government under federal and state constitutions and

the civil rights of men safeguarded by these.... We therefore commend and encourage every person and every group who is sincerely seeking to study Constitutional principles and awaken a sleeping and apathetic people to the alarming conditions that are rapidly advancing about us.” (President of the LDS Church, David O. McKay, Statement Concerning the Position of the Church on Communism, published in The Improvement Era, June 1966, p. 477 (For more info along these lines, quotes, etc., see “Two Churches Only” vol. 1 by Christian Markham at <http://www.twochurchesonly.com>))

-For a further study of God’s involvement with civic affairs, see the book “The Great and Abominable Church of the Devil” by a Seventy, H. Verlan Anderson, my notes on that are at this link:

<https://richardsonstudies.wordpress.com/2016/04/14/the-great-and-abominable-church-of-the-devil-by-h-verlan-andersen-summary-by-nate-richardson/>

-May this document be a proclamation to all those who think “all is well in Zion, yea Zion prospereth”.

-As we consider these things, let us avoid the tendency to think that everything bad the scriptures say about people is about other people than members of the only true Church (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), and certainly about other people than ourselves.

-This is to show that it’s our own fault that we are not yet a Zion people, that we are not yet enjoying all the knowledge and blessings of God.

-May I be clear, I sustain the leaders of the Church. This document is to point out that it’s the members, not to Brethren leading the Church, who have gone astray, and whom are the cause of the decreased light in certain areas of gospel knowledge.

-Bruce R McConkie and Hugh Nibley make it clear that we are not at the level of spiritual knowledge of the ancients. We think that contemporary society always is ahead of the past, but not so! Just because you have technology does not mean that you have wisdom, or eternal truths which righteous in days past have attained! Until we repent as a people and more fully come to God, we will not receive the high spiritual blessings which those of the city of Enoch, and perhaps other groups, had attained.

-Joseph Smith said he was trying to get the LDS to become like the city of Enoch, but he could never get them to that point. They wouldn’t have it.

-Losing blessings for rebellion is not a new thing; we were at Missouri, and were driven out because of our wickedness. The D&C makes this clear.

-If they said what they did then, they would be sent to jail for violating the unjust law called the “Homeland Security Act”, and perhaps God thinks that currently they would do better out of jail; of course this can only go so far; eventually the prophets, based on the Book of Mormon, will be jailed for what they are constrained by God to say.

-As we review scripture, remember that, especially the Book of Mormon, was written for our day, and is a type of what will happen in our day.

-Yes there is an aspect of the message of today being focused on our present needs, but we cannot ignore the aspect of receiving less because we have rejected what was given to us!

-” For behold, there were many of the Nephites who had become hardened and impenitent and grossly wicked, insomuch that they did reject the word of God and all the preaching and prophesying which did come among them.” (Hel. 6:2)

-“And they did reject all his words, insomuch that he could not stay among them, but returned again unto the land of his nativity.” (Hel. 7:3)

-“And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you: At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them.” (3 Ne. 16:10)

-“And I did endeavor to preach unto this people, but my mouth was shut, and I was forbidden that I should preach unto them; for behold they had wilfully rebelled against their God” (Mormon 1:16)

-“It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him. And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the lesser portion of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full. And they that will harden

their hearts, to them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and then they are taken captive by the devil, and led by his will down to destruction. Now this is what is meant by the chains of hell.” (Alma 12:9-11)

-“And after rejecting so great a knowledge, my son, they must perish soon, unto the fulfilling of the prophecies which were spoken by the prophets, as well as the words of our Savior himself.” (Moroni 8:29)

-“For behold, the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep. For behold, ye have closed your eyes, and ye have rejected the prophets; and your rulers, and the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity.” (2 Ne. 27:5)

-“Yea, it grieveth my soul and causeth me to shrink with shame before the presence of my Maker, that I must testify unto you concerning the wickedness of your hearts. And also it grieveth me that I must use so much boldness of speech concerning you, before your wives and your children, many of whose feelings are exceedingly tender and chaste and delicate before God, which thing is pleasing unto God; And it supposeth me that they have come up hither to hear the pleasing word of God, yea, the word which healeth the wounded soul. Wherefore, it burdeneth my soul that I should be constrained, because of the strict commandment which I have received from God, to admonish you according to your crimes, to enlarge the wounds of those who are already wounded, instead of consoling and healing their wounds; and those who have not been wounded, instead of feasting upon the pleasing word of God have daggers placed to pierce their souls and wound their delicate minds. But, notwithstanding the greatness of the task, I must do according to the strict commands of God, and tell you concerning your wickedness and abominations, in the presence of the pure in heart, and the broken heart, and under the glance of the piercing eye of the Almighty God.

Wherefore, I must tell you the truth according to the plainness of the word of God. For behold, as I inquired of the Lord, thus came the word unto me, saying: Jacob, get thou up into the temple on the morrow, and declare the word which I shall give thee unto this people. And now behold, my brethren, this is the word which I declare unto you, that many of you have begun to search for gold, and for silver, and for all manner of precious ores, in the which this land, which is a land of promise unto you and to your seed, doth abound most plentifully. And the hand of providence hath smiled upon you most pleasingly, that you have obtained many riches; and because some of you have obtained more

abundantly than that of your brethren ye are lifted up in the pride of your hearts, and wear stiff necks and high heads because of the costliness of your apparel, and persecute your brethren because ye suppose that ye are better than they.” (Jacob 2:6-13)

-“ And now, seeing ye know these things and cannot deny them except ye shall lie, therefore in this ye have sinned, for ye have rejected all these things, notwithstanding so many evidences which ye have received; yea, even ye have received all things, both things in heaven, and all things which are in the earth, as a witness that they are true. But behold, ye have rejected the truth, and rebelled against your holy God; and even at this time, instead of laying up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where nothing doth corrupt, and where nothing can come which is unclean, ye are heaping up for yourselves wrath against the day of judgment.” (Hel. 8:24-25)

-“Behold, the Lord esteemeth all flesh in one; he that is righteous is favored of God. But behold, this people had rejected every word of God, and they were ripe in iniquity; and the fulness of the wrath of God was upon them; and the Lord did curse the land against them, and bless it unto our fathers; yea, he did curse it against them unto their destruction, and he did bless it unto our fathers unto their obtaining power over it.” (1 Ne. 17:35)

–The Prophet Joseph Smith explained: “A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel pure intelligence flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas, so that by noticing it, you may find it fulfilled the same day or soon; ... those things that were presented unto your minds by the Spirit of God, will come to pass; and thus by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus.” (Boyd K Packer, *The Spirit Beareth Record*, Apr. 1971, Conf. Report; <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1971/04/the-spirit-beareth-record?lang=eng>)

-“We do not seek for spectacular experiences. President Spencer W. Kimball spoke of the many who “have no ear for spiritual messages ... when they come in common dress. ... Expecting the spectacular, one may not be fully alerted to the constant flow of revealed communication.”” (Boyd K Packer, *The Spirit Beareth Record*, Apr. 1971, Conf. Report; <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1971/04/the-spirit-beareth-record?lang=eng>)

-“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” (Hosea 4:6)

-“And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.” (1 Sam. 8:7)

-“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.” (1 Sam. 15:23)

-“And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord” (1 Sam. 15:26)

-“And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?” (Luke 20:17)

-“Verily, I say unto you, I am the stone, and those wicked ones reject me.” (JST Matt. 21:51)

-“Thy brethren have rejected you and your testimony, even the nation that has driven you out” (D&C 136:34)

-“Neither did the rebellious who rejected the testimonies and the warnings of the ancient prophets behold his presence, nor look upon his face.” (D&C 138:21)

-“the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves” (Luke 7:30)

-“The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes” (Luke 9:22)

-“And it came to pass that the prophets wererejected by the people, and they fled unto Com for protection, for the people sought to destroy them.” (Ether 11:12)

-“And they did reject all the words of the prophets, because of their secret society and wicked abominations.” (Ether 11:22)

-“But behold, when the time cometh that they shall dwindle in unbelief, after they have received so great blessings from the hand of the Lord—having a knowledge of the creation of the earth, and all men, knowing the great and marvelous works of the Lord from the creation of the world; having power given them to do all things by faith; having all the commandments from the beginning, and having been brought by his infinite goodness into this precious land of promise—behold, I say, if the day shall come that they will reject the Holy One of Israel, the true

Messiah, their Redeemer and their God, behold, the judgments of him that is just shall rest upon them.” (2 Ne. 1:10)

-“And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.” (Mark 7:9)

-“But thou hast utterly rejected us; thou art very wroth against us.” (Lam. 5:22)

-“Yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and thine hands upon thine head: for the Lord hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them.” (Jer. 2:37)

-“Nevertheless, thou hast seen great sorrow, for thou hast rejected me many times because of pride and the cares of the world.” (D&C 39:9)

-“Full well is it written of you, by the prophets whom ye have rejected.” (JST Mark 7:10)

-“For if they do reject these things the hour of their judgment is nigh, and their house shall be left unto them desolate.” (D&C 84:115)

-“Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them.” (Jer. 6:30)

-“The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?” (Jer. 8:9)

-” But those who harden their hearts in unbelief, and reject it, it shall turn to their own condemnation” (D&C 20:15)

-“straightway Satan tempted him; and the fear of persecution and the cares of the world caused him to reject the word.” (D&C 40:2)

-“Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the Lord hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath.” (Jer. 7:29)

-“And whoso rejecteth you shall be rejected of my Father and his house; and you shall cleanse your feet in the secret places by the way for a testimony against them.” (D&C 99:4)

-“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.” (Isa. 53:3)

-“Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul lothed Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? we looked for peace, and there is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble!” (Jer. 14:9)

-“O ye fair ones, how could ye have departed from the ways of the Lord! O ye fair ones, how could ye have rejected that Jesus, who stood with open arms to receive you!” (Mormon 6:17)

-“For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.” (Heb. 12:17)

-” For behold, they have rejected the words of the prophets. Wherefore, if my father should dwell in the land after he hath been commanded to flee out of the land, behold, he would also perish. Wherefore, it must needs be that he flee out of the land.” (1 Ne. 3:18)

-“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?” (Matt. 21:42)

-“Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.” (Jer. 6:19)

-” And it shall be said in time to come—That these abominations were had from Cain; for he rejected the greater counsel which was had from God; and this is a cursing which I will put upon thee, except thou repent.” (Moses 5:25)

-“except you withdraw your purposes, behold, ye will pull down the wrath of that God whom you have rejected upon you, even to your utter destruction.” (Alma 54:9)

-“if you do not these things at the end of the appointment ye shall be rejected as a church” (D&C 124:32)

-” And the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight.” (2 Kings 17:20)

-“For behold, I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory.” (D&C 132:4)

-“And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes, and by your thousands.” (1 Sam. 10:19)

-“And it came to pass that they who rejected the gospel were called Lamanites, and Lemuelites, and Ishmaelites; and they did not dwindle in unbelief, but they did wilfully rebel against the gospel of Christ; and they did teach their children that they should not believe, even as their fathers, from the beginning, did dwindle.” (4 Ne. 1:38)

-“But, behold, they shall have wars, and rumors of wars; and when the day cometh that the Only Begotten of the Father, yea, even the Father of

heaven and of earth, shall manifest himself unto them in the flesh, behold, they will reject him, because of their iniquities, and the hardness of their hearts, and the stiffness of their necks.” (2 Ne. 25:12)

-“Wherefore, the wicked are rejected from the righteous, and also from that tree of life, whose fruit is most precious and most desirable above all other fruits; yea, and it is the greatest of all the gifts of God. And thus I spake unto my brethren. Amen.” (1 Ne. 15:36)

-” desolation and utter abolishment which await them if they do reject these things.” (D&C 84:114)

-“And it came to pass that Alma and Amulek, Amulek having forsaken all his gold, and silver, and his precious things, which were in the land of Ammonihah, for the word of God, he being rejected by those who were once his friends and also by his father and his kindred;” (Alma 15:16)

-“For behold, the Spirit of the Lord ceaseth soon to strive with them; for behold, they have rejected the prophets, and Jeremiah have they cast into prison. And they have sought to take away the life of my father, insomuch that they have driven him out of the land.” (1 Ne. 7:14)

-“And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them, that they should not do like them.” (2 Kings 17:15)

–There are those who hear testimonies borne in the Church, by those in high station and by members in the wards and branches, all using the same words—“I know that God lives; I know that Jesus is the Christ,” and come to question, “Why cannot it be said in plainer words? Why aren’t they more explicit and more descriptive? Cannot the apostles say more?”

How like the sacred experience in the temple becomes our personal testimony. It is sacred, and when we are wont to put it into words, we say it in the same way—all using the same words. The apostles declare it in the same phrases with the little Primary or Sunday School youngster. “I know that God lives and I know that Jesus is the Christ.”

We would do well not to disregard the testimonies of the prophets or of the children, for “he imparteth his words by angels unto men, yea, not only men but women also. Now this is not all; little children do have words given unto them many times which confound the wise and the learned.” (Alma 32:23.)

Some seek for a witness to be given in some new and dramatic and different way.

The bearing of a testimony is akin to a declaration of love. The romantics and poets and couples in love, from the beginning of time, have sought more impressive ways of saying it, or singing it, or writing it. They have used all of the adjectives, all of the superlatives, all manner of poetic expression. And when all is said and done, the declaration which is most powerful is the simple, three-word variety.” (Boyd K Packer, The Spirit Beareth Record, Apr. 1971, Conf. Report; <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1971/04/the-spirit-beareth-record?lang=eng>)

## Prophet Cannot Lead us Astray: Quotes

"We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God." (Articles of Faith 1:9)

"Beware of those who would set up the dead prophets against the living prophets, for the living prophets always take precedence." (President Ezra Taft Benson, "Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophet," Address given Tuesday, February 26, 1980 at Brigham Young University)

"There is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of this priesthood are conferred." (D&C 132:7)

"Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me; For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith. For by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you." (D&C 21:4-6)

"We are too often afraid of what is called blind obedience, but obedience to God is always right -- blind or otherwise." (Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church, Conference Report, October 1970, Page 16)

"In the days ahead there will be times when nothing but the wisdom of God, descending from heaven and flowing forth from prophetic lips, will be able to save his people." (Elder Bruce R. McConkie, A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, Deseret Book Company, 1985, page 478)

"It is an easy thing to believe in the dead prophets. . . . One day when President Grant was living, I sat in my office across the street following a general conference. A man came over to see me, an elderly man. He was very upset about what had been said

in this conference by some of the Brethren, including myself. I could tell from his speech that he came from a foreign land. After I had quieted him enough so he would listen, I said, 'Why did you come to America?' 'I am here because a prophet of God told me to come.' 'Who was the prophet?' I continued. 'Wilford Woodruff.' 'Do you believe Wilford Woodruff was a prophet of God?' 'Yes, I do.' 'Do you believe that President Joseph F. Smith was a prophet of God?' 'Yes, sir.' Then came the sixty-four dollar question. 'Do you believe that Heber J. Grant is a prophet of God?' His answer, 'I think he ought to keep his mouth shut about old age assistance.' Now I tell you that a man in his position is on the way to apostasy. He is forfeiting his chances for eternal life. So is everyone who cannot follow the living Prophet of God.' (Elder Marion G. Romney, Conference Report, April 1953, page 125)

"I remember years ago when I was a Bishop I had President [Heber J.] Grant talk to our ward. After the meeting I drove him home. . . . Standing by me, he put his arm over my shoulder and said: 'My boy, you always keep your eye on the President of the Church, and if he ever tells you to do anything, and it is wrong, and you do it, the Lord will bless you for it.' Then with a twinkle in his eye, he said, 'But you don't need to worry. The Lord will never let his mouthpiece lead the people astray.'" (Elder Marion G. Romney, Conference Report, October 1960, page 78)

"You may not like what comes from the authority of the Church. It may contradict your political views. It may contradict your social views. It may interfere with some of your social life. . . . Your safety and ours depends upon whether or not we follow. . . . Let's keep our eye on the President of the Church." (President Harold B. Lee, Conference Report, October 1970, pages 152-153)

"Even in the Church many are prone to garnish the sepulchers of yesterday's prophets and mentally stone the living ones." President Spencer W. Kimball, Instructor, 95:257)

"Some of the leading men in Kirtland were much opposed to Joseph the Prophet, meddling with temporal affairs. . . . In a public meeting of the Saints, I said, 'Ye Elders of Israel, . . . will some of

you draw the line of demarcation, between the spiritual and temporal in the Kingdom of God, so that I may understand it?' Not one of them could do it. . . . I defy any man on earth to point out the path a Prophet of God should walk in, or point out his duty, and just how far he must go, in dictating temporal or spiritual things. Temporal and spiritual things are inseparably connected, and ever will be. (President Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, 10:363-364)

"Look to the Presidency and receive instruction." (President Joseph Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, selected by Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1938], page 161)

"And with my servant Almon Babbitt, there are many things with which I am not pleased; behold, he aspireth to establish his counsel instead of the counsel which I have ordained, even that of the Presidency of my Church." (D&C 124:84)

## Prophets Can Lead us Astray Quotes

(the fact that some say they can and some say they can't is in and of itself an evidence of fallibility, by the way)

Special thanks to Josie Jo for helping compile some of this:

Can a prophet lead us astray?

There have actually been conflicting things taught about whether or not the prophet can lead us astray. Wilford Woodruff declared that if he attempted to lead people astray, the Lord would remove him from His place. But earlier prophets have warned that prophets can lead us astray and that we should seek the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to know when they are speaking as prophets.

Joseph Smith said, "a prophet is only a prophet when he is acting as such."

Brigham Young, at one time, was concerned about something Joseph Smith had told the people. On further reflection, he said,

"...If the Lord was disposed to let Joseph lead the people astray, for He had called him and instructed him to gather Israel and restore the priesthood and kingdom to them. It was not my prerogative to call him in question with regard to any act of his life. He was God's servant, and not mine. He did not belong to the people but to the Lord, and was doing the work of the Lord and if He [God] should suffer him [Joseph Smith] to lead the people astray, it would be because they ought to be led astray...it would be because they deserved it. If he should suffer them to be chastised, and some of them destroyed, it would be because they deserved it, or to accomplish some righteous purpose. That was my faith, and it is my faith still." – Brigham Young, Great Salt Lake City, March 29, 1857 Journal of Discourses 4:297-298;

Not only CAN a prophet lead us astray, there is scriptural evidence that the Lord may ask him to “prove us”. In 1 Kings chapter 13 it says,

A certain prophet of God was given an errand by the Lord, and strictly charged that he should “eat no bread, nor drink water” on his way. But he allows himself to be led astray by another prophet of God, who was instructed by an angel to test or “prove” the man. Please keep in mind that Article of Faith 8 says, " We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly..."

1 Kings 13:18 was clarified by Joseph Smith himself, so we know we have a correct reading of it. It reads (with the JST clarification):

"He said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water, that I may prove him; and he lied not unto him."

An angel appeared to him, spake unto him by the word of the Lord, and asked the prophet to prove whether or not the other prophet would be faithful to the Lords' original instruction. The disobedient prophet failed. Not only was he NOT blessed for following the counsel of the true prophet, he was "slain" according to the word of the Lord for being disobedient TO THE LORD:

21 And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee,

22 But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the Lord did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.

23 ¶And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back.

24 And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase.

26 And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard thereof, he said, It is the man of God, who was disobedient unto the word of the Lord: therefore the Lord hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake unto him.

We must think for ourselves! We cannot remain on borrowed light.

J. Golden Kimball, in a Conference Report, April 1904, said, "all the men in the United States cannot prevent a man from thinking. There are not Apostles enough in the Church to prevent us from thinking, and they are not disposed to do so; but some people fancy because we have the Presidency and Apostles of the Church they will do the thinking for us. There are men and women so mentally lazy that they hardly think for themselves. To think calls for effort, which makes some men tired and wearies their souls. Now, brethren and sisters, we are surrounded with such conditions that it requires not only thought, but the guidance of the Holy Spirit. **LATTER-DAY SAINTS, YOU MUST THINK FOR YOURSELVES. NO MAN OR WOMAN CAN REMAIN IN THIS CHURCH ON BORROWED LIGHT.**" I am a strong believer in the following statement made by my father in the House of the Lord in 1856 "We think we are secure in the chambers of the everlasting hills, but the time will come when we will be so mixed up that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God. Then, brethren, look out for the great sieve, for there will be a great sifting time, and many will fall; for I say unto you there is a test, a test, a TEST coming, and who will be able to stand?"

President Nelson also recently stated, "...in coming days, it will not be possible to survive spiritually without the guiding, directing, comforting, and constant influence of the Holy Ghost."

"PRESIDENT Joseph Smith read the 14th chapter of Ezekiel [see, for example, verses 9-10: 'If the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing...the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeketh unto him.']...said the Lord had declared by the Prophet [Ezekiel], that the people should each one stand for himself, and depend

on no man or men in that state of corruption of the Jewish church -- that righteous persons could only deliver their own souls -- applied it to the present state [1842] of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints -- said if the people departed from the Lord, they must fall -- that they were depending on the Prophet, hence were darkened in their minds, in consequence of neglecting the duties devolving upon themselves..."

(Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith pp. 237-3)

In the Journal of Discourses it says, "...Now those men, or those women, who know no more about the power of God, and the influences of the Holy Spirit, than to be led entirely by another person, suspending their own understanding, and pinning their faith upon another's sleeve, will never be capable of entering into the celestial glory, to be crowned as they anticipate; they will never be capable of becoming Gods. They cannot rule themselves, to say nothing of ruling others, but they must be dictated to in every trifle, like a child. They cannot control themselves in the least, but James, Peter, or somebody else must control them. They never can become Gods, nor be crowned as rulers with glory, immortality, and eternal lives. They never can hold sceptres of glory, majesty, and power in the celestial kingdom. Who will? Those who are valiant and inspired with the true independence of heaven, who will go forth boldly in the service of their God, leaving others to do as they please, determined to do right, though all mankind besides should take the opposite course. Will this apply to any of you? Your own hearts can answer." (JD 1:312)

In his talk "The 14 Fundamentals of Following the Prophet", Ezra Taft Benson quoted President Marion G. Romney who said, at a General Conference in 1960, "I remember years ago when I was a bishop I had President Heber J. Grant talk to our ward. After the meeting I drove him home ... Standing by me, he put his arm over my shoulder and said: 'My boy, you always keep your eye on the President of the Church and if he ever tells you to do anything, and it is wrong, and you do it, the Lord will bless you for it.' Then with a twinkle in his eye, he said, 'But you don't need to worry. The Lord will never let his mouthpiece lead the people astray.'" (Conference Report, October 1960, p. 78.)

"According to Spencer W. Kimball's son Edward, PRESIDENT Kimball was upset over the talk [The 14 Fundamentals of Following the Prophet]

because he wanted "to protect the church against being misunderstood as ...espousing an unthinking 'follow the leader' mentality.'

President Kimball's concern was in direct line with authoritative, published statements from many of our prophets: "We have heard men who hold the priesthood remark that they would do **anything they were told to do by those who preside over them (even) if they knew it was WRONG**; but **such obedience as this is worse than folly to us; it is slavery in the extreme**; and the man who would thus willingly degrade himself, should not claim a rank among intelligent beings, until he turns from his folly. A man of God would despise the idea. Others, in the extreme exercise of their almighty authority have taught that such obedience was necessary, and that no matter what the saints were told to do by their presidents, they should do it without any questions. When the Elders of Israel will so far indulge in these extreme notions of obedience as to teach them to the people, it is generally because they have it in their hearts to do wrong themselves." (Millennial Star, vol.14 #38, pp. 593-95)

Apostle Charles W. Penrose, who would later serve as counselor to President Smith, declared:

"President Wilford Woodruff is a man of wisdom and experience, and we respect him, but we do not believe his personal views or utterances are revelations from God; and when 'Thus saith the Lord', comes from him, the saints investigate it: they do not shut their eyes and take it down like a pill." (Millennial Star 54:191)

George Q. Cannon, Counselor to three Church Presidents, expressed it thus: "Do not, brethren, put your trust in man though he be a bishop, an apostle, or a PRESIDENT. If you do, they will fail you at some time or place; they will do wrong or seem to, and your support be gone;" (Millennial Star 53:658-59, quoted in Gospel Truth, 1:319)

President George Q. Cannon taught, "It is the design of the Lord to develop within every man and woman the principle of knowledge, that all may know for themselves. He has poured out His holy spirit upon all of us, and not upon President Young nor upon bro. Joseph alone. The Lord designs that the principle of knowledge shall be developed in every heart, that all may stand before Him in the dignity of their manhood,

doing understandingly what He requires of them, not depending upon nor being blindly led by their priests or leaders, as is the universal custom, and one of the most fruitful sources of evil to the people on the face of the earth. God intends to break down this order of things, and to develop in the bosom of every human being who will be obedient to the gospel and the principles of truth and righteousness, that knowledge which will enable them to perform understandingly all the labors and duties he requires of them.

“Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men, **SAVE THEIR PRECEPTS SHALL BE GIVEN BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY GHOST.**” (2 Nephi 28:31)

How will we know if they are given by the power of the Holy Ghost? “We can tell when the speakers are moved upon by the Holy Ghost only when we, ourselves, are moved upon by the Holy Ghost. In a way, this completely shifts the responsibility from them to us to determine when they so speak.”

(PRESIDENT J. Rueben Clark [address delivered to seminary and institute of religion personnel, 7 July 1954])

“Men and women should become settled in the truth and rounded in a knowledge of the Gospel, depending upon no person for borrowed light, but trusting only upon the Holy Spirit.” (PRESIDENT Joseph F. Smith; as quoted by Elder Samuel O. Bennion

“You must work through the Spirit. If that leads you into conflict with the program of the Church, you follow the voice of the Spirit.” (Elder S. Dilworth Young, First Council of the Seventy, 1945)

There’s no need to assume that the prophets know more than we do. Joseph Smith said, “This principle ought in its proper place to be taught, for God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what He will make known unto the Twelve, and even the least Saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them...”

Wolves among the Sheep: Ezra Taft Benson gave a talk in 1972 in which he quoted J. Reuben Clark about the dangers we may find, even IN the church: "Even within the Church we have been warned that 'the ravening

wolves are amongst us, from our own membership, and they, more than any others, are clothed in sheep's clothing, because they wear the habiliments of the priesthood.'" (Ezra Taft Benson quoting J. Reuben Clark, Jr., CR, April 1949, p. 163.).

Ezra Taft Benson not only emphasized the words of J. Reuben Clark, he made it clear that things were worse than when he first said it. He stated, "The wolves amongst our flock are more numerous and devious today than when President Clark made this statement." (Ezra Taft Benson, Conference Report, April 1969, pp. 10-15)

He further stated:

"Not only are there apostates within our midst, but there are also apostate doctrines that are sometimes taught in our classes and from our pulpits and that appear in our publications. And these apostate precepts of men cause our people to stumble. As the Book of Mormon, speaking of our day, states: 'They have ALL gone astray save it be a few, who are the humble followers of Christ; nevertheless, they are led, that in many instances they do err because they are taught by the precepts of men'" (2 Nephi 28:14)" (Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, Pg.89 90).

A test coming from WITHIN the church.

President Benson warned, "Six of the original twelve apostles selected by Joseph Smith were excommunicated. The three witnesses to the Book of Mormon left the Church. Three of Joseph Smith's counselors fell--one even helped plot the Prophet's death. A natural question that might arise would be, if the Lord knew in advance that these men would fall, as he undoubtedly did, why did he have his prophet call them to such high office? The answer is, to fill the Lord's purposes. For even the Master followed the will of the Father by selecting Judas. President George Q. Cannon suggested an explanation, too, when he stated, "Perhaps it is His own design that faults and weaknesses should appear in high places IN ORDER THAT HIS SAINTS MAY LEARN TO TRUST IN HIM and NOT in ANY man or men." And this would parallel Lehi's warning: 'put not your trust in the arm of flesh' (2 Nephi 4:35)... It is from WITHIN the church that the greatest hindrance comes. And so, it seems, it has been. Now the question arises, will we stick with the kingdom and can

we avoid being deceived?...Brigham Young said: The Adversary presents his principles and arguments in the most approved style, and in the most winning tone, attended with the most graceful attitudes; and he is very careful to ingratiate himself into the favour of the powerful and influential of mankind...Such characters put on the manners of an angel, appearing as nigh like angels of light as they possibly can,...The good which they do, they do it to bring to pass an evil purpose... Those of us who think ‘all is well in zion’ in spite of Book of Mormon warnings might ponder the words of Heber C. Kimball, who said:... “the time is coming when we will be mixed up in these now peaceful valleys to that extent that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God. Then, brethren look out for the great sieve, for there will be a great sifting time, and many will fall; for I say unto you there is a test, a Test, a TEST coming." (Ezra Taft Benson: God, Family, Country p. 335 - 337)

Quentin L. Cook in the October 2016 General Conference, reconfirms that the prophecy Benson cited and Heber C. Kimball spoke of (making 3 witnesses in total of this prophecy) is coming in OUR DAY. He says:

"At the dawn of the Restoration, many at least professed to follow the Savior’s teachings. Many countries considered themselves Christian nations. But even then there was prophecy of a more difficult time for our day. Heber C. Kimball was one of the original Twelve Apostles of this dispensation and First Counselor to President Brigham Young. He warned: “The time is coming when ... it will be difficult to tell THE FACE OF A SAINT FROM THE FACE OF AN ENEMY to the people of God. Then ... look out for the great sieve, for there will be a great sifting time, and many will fall.” He concluded that there is “a TEST coming.”

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JST Mark 9:44

44 THEREFORE, LET EVERY MAN STAND OR FALL, BY HIMSELF, AND NOT FOR ANOTHER; OR TRUSTING IN ANOTHER.

“Brethren, this church will be led onto the very brink of hell by the leaders of this people, then God will send the one mighty and strong spoken of in the 85th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, to save and redeem this church” (Brigham Young quoted about D&C 85:7, Truth, March 1, 1936, 1:10, p. 135).

"[I]t shall come to pass, that I, the Lord God, will send one mighty and strong, holding the sceptre of power in his hand, clothed with light for a covering, whose mouth shall utter words, eternal words; while his bowels shall be a fountain of truth, to set in order the house of God, and to arrange by lot the inheritances of the Saints, whose names are found, and the names of their fathers, and of their children enrolled in the book of the law of God: while that man, who was called of God and appointed, that putteth forth his hand to steady the ark of God, shall fall by the vivid shaft of lighting ....D&C 85:7

Other recommended reading:

Jeremiah 23 (a chapter for the "latter day")

On sustaining:

President Joseph F. Smith, 6 April 1904:

“It is well understood that we meet together in general conference twice a year for the purpose of presenting the names of those who have been chosen as presiding officers in the Church, and it is understood that those who occupy these positions are dependent upon the voice of the people for the continuance of the authority, the rights and privileges they exercise. ... We desire that the Latter-day Saints will exercise the liberty wherewith they have been made free by the Gospel of Jesus Christ; for they are entitled to know the right from the wrong, to see the truth and draw the line between it and error; and it is their privilege to judge for themselves and to act upon their own free agency with regard to their choice as to sustaining or otherwise those who should exercise the presiding functions among them. We desire the Latter-day Saints to exercise their prerogative, which is, to vote as the Spirit of the Lord

prompts them on the measures and the men that may be presented unto them.”(Seventy-fourth Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints [a.k.a. Conference Report, April 1904] [Salt Lake City, Utah: The Deseret News, 1904], pages 73–74.)

The First Presidency, 26 March 1907:

“The ecclesiastical government itself exists by the will of the people; elections are frequent, and the members are at liberty to vote as they choose. . . . The Church officers, in the exercise of their functions, are answerable to the Church. No officer, however exalted his position, is exempt from this law. . . . Even the President, its highest officer, is subject to these laws, and special provision is made for his trial, and, if necessary, his deposition.” (“An Address: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to the World” [Salt Lake City, Utah: April 1907], page 9, Seventy-Seventh Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints [a.k.a. Conference Report, April 1907] [Salt Lake City, Utah: The Deseret News], appendix.)

President John Taylor, 7 October 1872:

“If we have presidents or apostles or anybody that we do not like, let us vote them out, and be free men, and cultivate and cherish in our bosoms the principles of liberty.” (“Discourse,” reported by David W. Evans, The Deseret News [weekly], volume 21, number 48, edited by George Q. Cannon [Salt Lake City, Utah: George Q. Cannon, 1 January 1873], page 729.)

President Brigham Young, 16 February 1847:

“When I go astray, give wrong counsel and lead this people astray, then is time enough to put me down.” (In John D. Lee, Journals of John D. Lee: 1846–48 and 1859, edited by Charles Kelly [Salt Lake City: Rolla Bishop Watt, 1938], page 80.)

Jesus Christ, between circa 27 a.d. and circa 36 a.d.:

“If thine eye which seeth for thee, him that is appointed to watch over thee to show thee light, become a transgressor and offend thee, pluck him out.” (In “The Testimony of St. Mark,” chapter 9, verse 46, The Holy Scriptures Containing the Old and New Testaments: An Inspired Revision of the Authorized Version, [translated] by Joseph Smith, Junior, new corrected edition [Independence, Missouri: Herald Publishing

House, ©1944], page 1146. See also Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts, edited by Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews [Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, 2004], page 338.)"

D&C 124:144 speaks of approving or disapproving at the conference of names presented

President Kimball said in GC 1976 (I believe Oct) that not all the keys of the Priesthood have been restored. Nor have they been as of yet to my knowledge. It seems to me several other prophets have said the same thing since him, but I can't quote any.

## 10 Largely Forgotten, but Timeless Principles, in Sustaining Leaders By the Joseph Smith Foundation Team – Full Text

See [JosephSmithFoundation.org](http://JosephSmithFoundation.org)



see [josephsmithfoundation.org](http://josephsmithfoundation.org)

Full text shared with permission.

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The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that there is no error in the revelations that he received as they were revealed. Therefore, in our day, when it seems that nearly every man or woman has a different understanding of good leadership and how leaders should be sustained, we believe it is imperative to look back to the revelations to clarify these sensitive but unavoidable questions and opinions. Here are some of the questions that float around the Internet:

- Should we follow the counsel of church leaders if we believe their counsel may be in error?
- When do church leaders speak for God, and how can you know?
- How should I sustain my ecclesiastical leaders if I believe they are in error?

- Is it possible for church leaders to make serious mistakes?
- Should we treat the teachings of church leaders differently according to their position and station?
- Are the teachings and directions of the President of the Church infallible?
- Can a President of the Church fall and become wicked? Should he ever be removed from office?

The following are ten timeless principles that answer many of the current questions brooding in the minds of many members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We believe that the Lord has answered these questions with unmistakable clarity in the revelations and teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

**1. Any person who blindly follows his or her leaders is not capable of acquiring the Celestial Kingdom.**

The Prophet Joseph Smith was very concerned, in Nauvoo, that some members of the Church were blindly following church leaders including his own words rather than learning to think for themselves.

President Joseph Smith read the 14th Chapter of Ezekiel—said the Lord had declared by the prophet that the people should each one stand for himself, and depend on no man or men in that state of corruption of the Jewish Church—that righteous persons could only deliver their own souls—applied it to the present state of the Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints—said if the people departed from the Lord they must fall—that they were depending on the prophet, hence were darkened in their minds, in consequence of neglecting the duties devolving upon themselves . . .

*Joseph Smith, History, 1838–1856, volume C-1 Addenda, p. [71-72](#), The Joseph Smith Papers.*

The Prophet Joseph Smith also taught that true, inspired leaders teach correct principles and let the people govern themselves.

Some years ago, in Nauvoo, a gentleman in my hearing, a member of the Legislature, asked Joseph Smith how it was that he was enabled to govern so many people, and to preserve such perfect order; remarking at the same time that it was impossible for them to do it anywhere else. Mr. Smith remarked that it was very easy to do that. “How?” responded the gentleman; “to us it is very difficult.” Mr. Smith replied, “I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves.”

*John Taylor, “[The Organization of the Church](#),” *The Latter-day Saints Millennial Star*, vol. 13, no. 22, November 15, 1851, 339.*

President Brigham Young taught that no man is capable of entering the Celestial Kingdom who follows his leaders blindly.

Who has influence over any one of you, to cause you to miss salvation in the celestial kingdom of God? I will answer these questions for myself. If brother Brigham and I shall take a wrong track, and be shut out of the kingdom of heaven, no person will be to blame but brother Brigham and I. I am the only being in heaven, earth, or hell, that can be blamed.

This will equally apply to every Latter-day Saint. Salvation is an individual operation. I am the only person that can possibly save myself. When salvation is sent to me, I can reject or receive it. In receiving it, I yield implicit obedience and submission to its great Author throughout my life, and to those whom He shall appoint to instruct me; in rejecting it, I follow the dictates of my own will in preference to the will of my Creator. There are those among this people who are influenced, controlled, and biased in their thoughts, actions, and feelings by some other individual or family, on whom they place their dependence for spiritual and temporal instruction, and for salvation in the end. These persons do not depend upon themselves for salvation, but upon another of their poor, weak, fellow mortals. “I do not depend upon any inherent goodness of my own,” say they, “to introduce me into the kingdom of glory, but I depend upon you, brother Joseph, upon you, brother Brigham, upon you, brother Heber, or upon you, brother James; I believe your judgment is superior to mine, and consequently I let you judge for me; your spirit is better than mine, therefore you can do good for me; I will submit myself wholly to you, and place in you all my confidence for life and salvation; where you go I will go, and where you tarry there I

will stay; expecting that you will introduce me through the gates into the heavenly Jerusalem.

I wish to notice this. We read in the Bible, that there is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars. In the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, these glories are called telestial, terrestrial, and celestial, which is the highest. These are worlds, different departments, or mansions, in our Father's house. Now those men, or those women, who know no more about the power of God, and the influences of the Holy Spirit, than to be led entirely by another person, suspending their own understanding, and pinning their faith upon another's sleeve, will never be capable of entering into the celestial glory, to be crowned as they anticipate; they will never be capable of becoming Gods. They cannot rule themselves, to say nothing of ruling others, but they must be dictated to in every trifle, like a child. They cannot control themselves in the least, but James, Peter, or somebody else must control them. They never can become Gods, nor be crowned as rulers with glory, immortality, and eternal lives. They never can hold scepters of glory, majesty, and power in the celestial kingdom. Who will? Those who are valiant and inspired with the true independence of heaven, who will go forth boldly in the service of their God, leaving others to do as they please, determined to do right, though all mankind besides should take the opposite course. Will this apply to any of you? Your own hearts can answer.

Do you know what is right and just, as well as I do? In some things you do, and in some things you may not know as well; but I will explain what I mean, in the following words—I will do all the good I can, and all I know how to do, and I will shun every evil that I know to be an evil. You can all do that much. I will apply my heart to wisdom, and ask the Lord to impart it to me; and if I know but little, I will improve upon it, that tomorrow I may have more, and thus grow from day to day, in the knowledge of the truth, as Jesus Christ grew in stature and knowledge from a babe to manhood; and if I am not now capable of judging for myself, perhaps I shall be in another year. We are organized to progress in the scale of intelligence, and the least Saint by adhering strictly to the order of God, may attain to a full and complete salvation through the grace of God, by his own faithfulness.

Brigham Young, "[\*The Privileges and Blessings of the Gospel\*](#)," in *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1 (London: Latter-day Saints Book Depot, 1854), 312. Discourse given on February 20, 1853.

President Joseph F. Smith echoed the Prophet Joseph and Brigham Young on blind obedience:

Concerning the question of blind obedience. Not a man in this Church, since the Prophet Joseph Smith down to the present day, has ever asked any man to do as he was told blindly. No Prophet of God, no Apostle, no President of a Stake, no Bishop, who has had the spirit of his office and calling resting upon him, has ever asked a soul to do anything that they might not know was right and the proper thing to do. We do not ask you to do anything that you may not know it is your duty to do, or that you may not know will be a blessing for you to do.

If we give you counsel, we do not ask you to obey that counsel without you know that it is right to do so. But how shall we know that it is right? By getting the Spirit of God in our hearts, by which our minds may be opened and enlightened, that we may know the doctrine for ourselves, and be able to divide truth from error, light from darkness and good from evil.

Joseph F. Smith, "[\*Blind Obedience and Tithing\*](#)," *The Latter-day Saints Millennial Star*, vol. 55, no. 5, January 30, 1893, 79-80.

## **2. No leader is infallible and therefore should not be followed blindly**

We have often read or heard repeated Christ's instruction to the Twelve: "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell." Have you ever wondered what the Lord was teaching in these verses? What specifically was the Son of God, while dwelling in mortality, trying to convey? We have participated in many Gospel Doctrine lessons where well-meaning members shared speculation and possible interpretations.



In truth, the clear meaning of the passage was lost because of corruption until the Prophet Joseph Smith was inspired to restore a certain portion. Turning to the Joseph Smith Translation of Mark, Chapter 9, we discover an inspired commentary that differs from the traditional King James version.

Therefore, if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; or if thy brother offend thee and confess not and forsake not, he shall be cut off. It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands, to go into hell.

For it is better for thee to enter into life without thy brother, than for thee and thy brother to be cast into hell; into the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

[Mark 9:40-41, JST](#)

So far, nothing too controversial here! If a neighbor, co-member, or friend falls away or abandons the truth, we must not endanger our own salvation by allowing ourselves to be led by them. We should exercise caution and prudence to ensure that we are not deceived. It would be better to “cut them off” than to become corrupted. This is not a revolutionary concept; we have heard this often. However, there is more to consider, such as, what is the context of these verses? The Savior continues by warning against transgression by individuals in positions of authority—leaders we do not generally suspect.

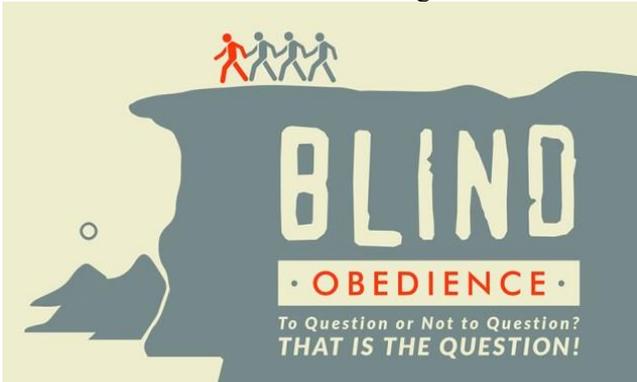
And again, if thy foot offend thee, cut it off; for he that is thy standard, by whom thou walkest, if he become a transgressor, he shall be cut off.

It is better for thee, to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell; into the fire that never shall be quenched.

[Mark 9:42-43, JST](#)

It is in this scripture that Mark Chapter 9 becomes a bit more controversial. We are warned that if the one who is “thy standard . . . become a transgressor, he shall be cut off.” Who might be this religious “standard”? Whose “walk” do you follow? Who is it that generally shows forth the religious path?

In the context of scripture, our “walk” is synonymous with our obedience to the commandments (Mosiah 4:15, D&C 25:2, 95:12, 2 John 1:6) and our righteous participation in the ordinances (D&C 136:4). When speaking of men “by whom thou walkest,” the Son of God issued an unambiguous warning against appointed exemplars and teachers who are liable to fall. Is it possible that a religious leader for whom we feel admiration and confidence “become a transgressor”? Realizing how easily we can be deceived if we are not protectively on guard, the Savior cautions us not to follow such transgressors “into hell.”



**You may also be interested in the article retelling the story of the Mountain Meadows Massacre & freedom fighter Helmuth Hubener, [“If Thine Eye Offend Thee” \(Part 1 – Blind Obedience? – To Question or Not to Question? That is the Question!\)](#) “The Lord in JST Mark 9 was clear, ‘Therefore, let every man stand or fall, by himself, and not for another; or not trusting another.’ (JST Mark 9:44) These principles are crucial for our day and time. The victims of the Mountain Meadows Massacre cry from the ground, ‘Let every man stand or fall, by himself, and not for another!’ The story of Helmuth Hubener pleads ‘We ought to obey God rather than men.’ The implications of truly understanding this**

fundamental doctrine may alter our eternal destinies as individuals and as a people.” ([Read more](#))

### **3. Sustaining church leaders when they stumble or are in error**

Because no leader is infallible, following any man or group of men (or women) blindly is unwise and may even be dangerous. How does one sustain a leader who is out of the way or in error? The first step is to avoid inappropriate behaviour, such as backbiting, evil speaking, or being critical. Instead, we should be respectful, beseeching heaven in mighty prayer on behalf of the person or group.

The young David who would later become King, and at that time was a man after the Lord’s own heart, provides an ideal example. Picking up the story in 1 Samuel, Chapter 24, King Saul, a man who had initially been chosen by God, and who was at this time still “the Lord’s anointed,” had become a wicked man. He was actively and provocatively seeking the young David’s life. Saul had been pursuing David, but had paused to camp in a cave. The story continues:

Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.

And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.

And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul’s robe privily.

And it came to pass afterward, that David’s heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul’s skirt.

And he said unto his men, The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord.

So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way.

David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.

And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?

Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee to day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the bLord's anointed.

Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it.

The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

[1 Samuel 24:2-12](#)

Sustaining leaders when they are acting inappropriately requires prayer, inspiration and great wisdom.

#### **4. All church leaders are accountable to the members, including the President**

The Prophet Joseph Smith stands as the greatest prototype of a righteous leader, excepting the Son of God. Throughout his life, the Prophet abhorred priestcraft and the dangerous practice of leader worship.

On April 6, 1843, at a special conference organized in commemoration of the anniversary of the organization of the Church, the Prophet declared:

It is my object to ascertain the [standing] of the first presidency. (as I have been instructed) I present myself for trial, I shall next present my councillors for trial. . . .

Are you satisfied with the first presedincy [*sic*], so far as I am concerned, or will you choose another? If I have done any thing [*sic*] to injure my character in the sight of men & angels— or men & women. come forward [and] tell of it. & if not ever after hold your peace.



*Joseph Smith, Journal, December 1842–June 1844; Book 2, 10 March 1843–14 July 1843, p. [50-51](#), The Joseph Smith Papers.*

The Prophet Joseph Smith was not afraid to acknowledge shortcomings and mistakes in ecclesiastical leadership, humbly announcing before the assembly of Saints,

If I have done any thing [*sic*] to injure my character in the sight of men & angels—or men & women, come forward [and] tell of it.

*Joseph Smith, Journal, December 1842–June 1844; Book 2, 10 March 1843–14 July 1843, p. [50-51](#), The Joseph Smith Papers.*

Joseph Smith, the prophet of the Restoration and head of the present dispensation—President of Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and a man who has the distinction of being the greatest man ever to live, excepting the Son, had a better right than any man to frown on criticism. However, even he did not consider himself above the law.

*“Joseph returned his thanks — to the assembly. & said he would serve them according to the best of his ability.”*

After requesting the Latter-day Saints to present any complaints or concerns, Brigham Young “arose & nominated Joseph Smith to continue as the President of the Church.” President Young demonstrated an unyielding loyalty to Joseph Smith, a theme he continued to exhibit throughout his life, even until his last breath.

Orson Hyde seconded President Young’s motion and then it was put to a vote. For the first time in the history of the Church, the vote was unanimous!

Such a show of hands was never seen before in the church.

Joseph retur[ne]d his thanks—to the assembly. & said he would serve them according to the best of his ability.  
*Joseph Smith, Journal, December 1842–June 1844; Book 2, 10 March 1843–14 July 1843, [p. 55](#), The Joseph Smith Papers.*

Sidney Rigdon (First Counselor) was then presented “for trial” and sustained.

William Law (Second Counselor) was then presented “for trial” and sustained.

Patriarch Hyrum Smith was then presented and the congregation voted in favor of Hyrum retaining his office.

At the conclusion of these actions, the Prophet Joseph Smith duly proclaimed,

I do not know any thing agai[n]st the twelve, if I did I would pres[e]nt them for trial.  
*Joseph Smith, Journal, December 1842–June 1844; Book 2, 10 March 1843–14 July 1843, [p. 55](#), The Joseph Smith Papers.*

The Prophet Joseph understood that he and his fellow leaders were not “above the law.” To Joseph Smith, ‘defending the Church’ did not mean defending his first counselor, his second counselor, or even himself as President.

Defending the Church meant defending the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and pointing the Latter-day Saints to the Father and the Son. It was in this that the Prophet begged his people to place their trust.



*Defending the Church meant defending the Gospel of Jesus Christ and pointing the Latter-day Saints to the Father and the Son.*

If the members knew of anything he had done wrong, he asked them to “come forward [and] tell of it” that he might rectify the issue. Joseph Smith understood that holding leaders accountable would not threaten the Church, for the foundation he built was founded on God, and not man.

**JOSEPH SMITH BUILT HIS FOUNDATION ON GOD, NOT MAN.**

The Lord has made it unmistakably clear in the revelations that any leader, high or low, can fail in his station. The Lord has even made provision to try leaders, including presidents of the Church.

And inasmuch as a President of the High Priesthood shall transgress, he shall be had in remembrance before the common council of the church, who shall be assisted by twelve counselors of the High Priesthood;

And their decision upon his head shall be an end of controversy concerning him.

Thus, none shall be exempted from the justice and the laws of God, that all things may be done in order and in solemnity before him, according to truth and righteousness.

[D&C 107:82-84](#)

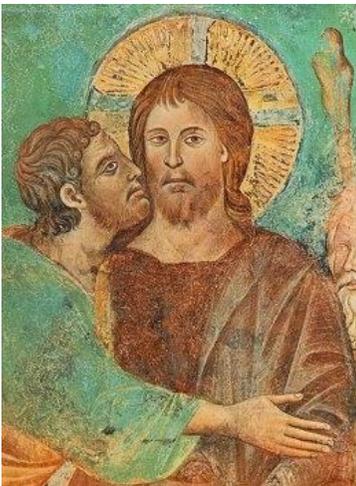
Why did the Lord call Judas Iscariot as one of his Twelve Apostles?

Too often, many members imagine that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints operates by some form of “magic,” and that somehow, every leader is perfect, every calling inspired, and every man fulfills his duty. In this imaginary scenario, no agency is exercised and no freedom of choice is allowed. In contrast, the evidence from of history testifies that many are called, but many do not live up to their calling.

Would the Lord truly call a man who, in the end, failed his calling?

Why did the Lord call Judas Iscariot as one of his Twelve Apostles? Was the Son of God deceived by Judas’ true character? Or was He instead reinforcing: “Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm . . .”? ([2 Nephi 28:31](#)) The Lord knew at the time of the calling that Judas was a devil, or would become so. ([John 6:70](#))

Some of our leaders are placed there to lead us and others of our leaders are placed there to test us.



### **5. Church leaders do not hold stewardship in the family, only in the Church as a whole**

It is inappropriate and can even be detrimental, sometimes dangerous, for church leaders in any position, including the President of the Church, to dictate to a family those decisions that rest in the stewardship and authority of the father

and mother. Just as a father should not presume to dictate to the President of the Church general church business, likewise, no church leader should attempt to dictate decisions that should be made in the family. Unfortunately, this is becoming more common because principles of stewardship have been forgotten.

President Joseph F. Smith taught that family decisions should remain with the family while church-wide decisions are appropriately made by general church leadership. Likewise, stake decisions are made by stake leadership, and ward decisions are made by ward leadership.

In the home the presiding authority is always vested in the father, and in all home affairs and family matters there is no other authority paramount. To illustrate this principle, a single incident will perhaps suffice. It sometimes happens that the elders are called in to administer to the members of a family. Among these elders there may be presidents of stakes, apostles, or even members of the first presidency of the Church. It is not proper under these circumstances for the father to stand back and expect the elders to direct the administration of this important ordinance. The father is there. It is his right and it is his duty to preside. He should select the one who is to administer the oil, and the one who is to be mouth in prayer, and he should not feel that because there are present presiding authorities in the Church that he is therefore divested of his rights to direct the administration of that blessing of the gospel in his home. (If the father be absent, the mother should request the presiding authority present to take charge.) The father presides at the table, at prayer, and gives general directions relating to his family life whoever may be present.”

*Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine (Deseret Book Company, 1968), 287.*

President Joseph F. Smith also insisted that family leadership (including the Celestial principles of patriarchal order) represent eternal and unchanging principles of the Gospel. These principles have been maintained throughout all other dispensations.

There is no higher authority in matters relating to the family organization, and especially when that organization is presided over by one holding the higher Priesthood, than that of the father. The authority is time honored, and among the people of God in all dispensations it has

been highly respected and often emphasized by the teachings of the prophets who were inspired of God. The patriarchal order is of divine origin and will continue throughout time and eternity. There is, then, a particular reason why men, women and children should understand this order and this authority in the households of the people of God, and seek to make it what God intended it to be, a qualification and preparation for the highest exaltation of his children. In the home the presiding authority is always vested in the father, and in all home affairs and family matters there is no other authority paramount.”

*Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine (Deseret Book Company, 1968), 2.*

## **6. ALL church leaders and members are imperfect and NO ONE speaks for God unless moved upon by the Holy Ghost**

It is easy to point fingers or to complain regarding the actions of this member or that leader, but one cannot hide behind the skirts of other individuals. Each of us individually bears the burden of discerning truth from error. President J. Reuben Clark Jr. emphasized the responsibility this places on the shoulders of every member, when he taught on how to properly judge:

When are the writings and sermons of church leaders entitled to the claim of being scripture?

I assume the scripture behind this question is the declaration of the Lord in a revelation given through Joseph . . .

And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation.

The very words of the revelation recognize that the Brethren may speak when they are not “moved upon by the Holy Ghost,” yet only when they do so speak, as so “moved upon,” is what they say Scripture. No

exceptions are given to this rule or principle. It is universal in its application.

The question is, how shall we know when the things they have spoken were said as they were “moved upon by the Holy Ghost?”

I have given some thought to this question, and the answer thereto so far as I can determine, is: We can tell when the speakers are “moved upon by the Holy Ghost” only when we, ourselves, are “moved upon by the Holy Ghost.”

In a way, this completely shifts the responsibility from them to us to determine when they so speak.

*J. Reuben Clark, “[When Are the Writings and Sermons of Church Leaders Entitled to the Claim of Being Scripture?](#)” *Deseret News*, July 31, 1954, sec. *Church News*, 11.*

In a revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith on September 11, 1831, the Lord charged every member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with the duty to judge and to purge iniquity from the Church:

Behold, I, the Lord, have made my church in these last days like unto a judge sitting on a hill, or in a high place, to judge the nations.

For it shall come to pass that the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion.

And liars and hypocrites shall be proved by them . . .

[\*Doctrine and Covenants 64:37-39\*](#)

Each of us must evaluate, and from time to time re-evaluate, what we are doing personally to help build the Kingdom of God, in the manner the Lord desires.

## **7. This dispensation is to receive the word of God ONLY through Joseph Smith**

On the day the Church was organized, the Lord gave a revelation to stand as the charter of the Church, commanding the members and leaders—both present and future—to “give heed unto all his [Joseph Smith’s] words and commandments which he shall give unto you,” promising that if the counsel was followed, “the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name’s glory.”

The institution Joseph Smith restored, using the keys and authority given to him by God, was both true and living. While no leader or member of the Church is perfect or inerrant, to the degree the teachings and revelations of Joseph Smith are followed, we have the divine promise that we will continue to experience success in our efforts.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained that while we have successive presidents of the Church and other apostles, the Prophet Joseph Smith’s words stand preeminent, and that we should regard every other leader as a mere echo of Joseph Smith.

Every dispensation head is a revealer of Christ for his day . . . and every other prophet or apostle who comes is a reflection and an echo and an exponent of the dispensation head. All such come to echo to the world and to expound and unfold what God has revealed through the man who was appointed to give his eternal word to the world for that era. Such is the dispensation concept.

*Bruce R. McConkie, “[This Generation Shall Have My Word through You,](#)” General Conference (June 1980).*

Elder McConkie also taught that the great revelations and important doctrines intended for this dispensation have come through the Prophet, Joseph Smith, and that there will be no great revelations extending beyond the foundation laid by the Prophet Joseph.

There are added revelations we could receive, and I hope will receive as we manage to get in tune with the Spirit. But the great reservoir of

revelation for our dispensation—meaning the things that we need to know to govern our conduct in order to gain an eternal life—these things have already been given. And there will not be great added reservoirs of substantive revelation that will come before the Second Coming because of the wickedness of the world. Some of that wickedness spills over and prevails among the Latter-day Saints.

*Ibid.*

In section 5 of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord explained that His word for our day will only come through Joseph Smith.

“This generation shall have my word through you” (D&C 5:10). Joseph Smith has given the word, and we echo the message . . .

*Ibid.*

## **8. There is a difference between power and authority in the Priesthood**

### *Handbook 2: Administering the Church*

Another important key is the difference between Priesthood power and authority.



For example, note the instruction given in the official handbook of the Church that brethren are to perform ordinances and pronounce blessings “by the authority of the priesthood.” Notice that there is no mention of “by the power of the priesthood.”

A leader may hold a certain position—he may be given authority—but whether or not he executes that duty with power depends on one thing: personal righteousness. This is true for fathers, bishops, stake presidents, members of the seventy, the Quorum of the Twelve, and even the presidents of the Church. It is the duty of all

priesthood bearers to live worthy of their calling but the sad truth is that many do not.

The oft-repeated verses from section 121 of the Doctrine and Covenants remind us:

Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?

Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson—

That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness.

[\*D&C 121:34–36\*](#)

Is the Son of God warning that many leaders are “called” to positions of leadership, but few live worthy of these callings?

### **9. Church leaders are only to promote their own teachings or doctrine through persuasion**

The worst possible kind of force for which a man or woman can be found guilty is the attempt to induce or require blind obedience or mind control under the color of ecclesiastical authority.

The revelation contained in section 121 of the the Doctrine and Covenants explains this concept:

No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—

[\*Doctrine and Covenants 121:40-41\*](#)

There is, perhaps, nothing more Hitler-esque or unrighteous than to forcefully require another individual to turn off his or her brain, and to submit blindly to authority, expecting the individual to do what he or she is told, rather than to think for themselves. Any individual guilty of teaching or requiring the blind obedience of another individual will stand accountable before God, according to His revelations.

Doctrine and Covenants section 134 also echoes the words of the Lord in section 121 by affirming that, “We believe that no government [and especially no church government] can exist in peace, except such laws are framed and held inviolate as will secure to each individual the free exercise of conscience . . .”

**10. In this dispensation, we have not been commanded to follow any man except the Prophet Joseph Smith.**

As we have mentioned above, on the day the Church was organized, the Lord gave a revelation He intended to have stand as the charter for the Church, commanding the members and leaders—both present and future—to “give heed unto all his [Joseph Smith’s] words and commandments which he shall give unto you . . .” Despite many others’ claims, the revelation is clear that this commandment applies to no leader other than Joseph Smith. Furthermore, there is no place in revelation where the members of the Church are commanded to follow the teachings of any other man, including any other president of the Church.

President Joseph Fielding Smith taught this principle on many occasions including the following:

It makes no difference what is written or what anyone has said, if what has been said is in conflict with what the Lord has revealed, we can set it

aside. My words, and the teaching of any other member of the Church, high or low, if they do not square with the revelations, we need not accept them. Let us have this matter clear. We have accepted the four standard works as the measuring yardsticks, or balances, by which we measure every man's doctrine.

You cannot accept the books written by the authorities of the Church as standards in doctrine, only in so far as they accord with the revealed word in the standard works.

If Joseph Fielding Smith writes something which is out of harmony with the revelations, then every member of the Church is duty bound to reject it. If he writes that which is in perfect harmony with the revealed word of the Lord, then it should be accepted.

*Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, vol. 3 (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1956), 203-204.*

## A Few Quotes & Notes on The Grandeur & Continuing Authority of Joseph Smith

-“Joseph Smith holds the keys of this last dispensation, and is now engaged behind the veil in the great work of the last days....It is his mission to see that all the children of men in this last dispensation are saved, that can be...”  
(Brigham Young “Intelligence Etc,” in JD vol. 7:289)

-“The greatest activity in this world or in the world to come is directly related to the work and mission of Joseph Smith – man of destiny, prophet of God....The Prophet Joseph Smith was not only “one of the noble and great ones,” but he gave and continues to give attention to important matters here on the earth even today from the realms above.” (Ezra Taft Benson, God Family Country: Our Three Great Loyalties 1974 p30-31)

-To hear the prophet Joseph Smith speak at any time on any subject, Brigham Young always went, even when it meant hunger and poverty would result for himself and his household.

-storekeeper, general, Mayor of Nauvoo, general in Nauvoo, Chief Judge in Nauvoo, store builder, service project leader, prophet, farmer, city founder, pioneer, employer, temple builder, translator, student of languages, interpreter, reader of ancient texts, editor of a church newspaper (in Nauvoo?)

-“keep the commandments, and a halo of glory will be around your path”  
-teachings on charity chapter JS Teachings.

-“seek own furtherance while brethren are in poverty can’t have the spirit” -JS teachings; on charity chapter

-JS after playing in a ballgame would say to the people to come build a cabin, or hitch up and gather wood for poor and cut such, or give his shoes from his feet for a man without, and put people up in his home to care for them and sleep in a tent his 4 room house so full. -JS teachings; on charity chapter

-Satan flatters us of our own righteousness. No man ought declare his own righteousness. -JS teachings RS chapter and another perhaps the one on charity.

Martyrdom:

JS walking from his farm said you would look at it several times too knowing you would never see it again.

JS said to a guard at Carthage: do I look like the fearsome man you make me out to be? The man said no quite opposite actually. But I can't tell what is in your heart by your appearance. JS said that is true, but I can see in yours. You thirst for blood and won't be satiated until you see plenty of it. And you will (The Civil War). And cannon blast will be pointed at you from a source you know not (cannons in Civil war in great amounts).

Hyrum shot by the nose JS said holding him oh my poor brother Hyrum! JS went for the window and said My Lord and My God! Then was shot as he spoke this on both sides and fell from the window, hit the ground by a well, and after a few breaths there, 3, he died.

\*How heartbreaking for JS to see his brother die in the cause that he called him to! How frightening to be running for your life and to be attacked by mobs and running from one corner to another to escape death! How wretched to know you are walking to your death! This is the fearsome fight for Christ and all men.

-for some of these martyrdom descriptions, see "Joseph and Hyrum their final days with historian C. Michael Trapp"

## Where is Joseph Smith in the Bible?

On my mission in the bible belt, one of the questions we were often asked was “if Joseph Smith is so important, which bible prophets prophesied of his coming and the work he would do?” This document helps answer that question, though it is far from exhaustive. There are many parallels and symbols in the bible which can be applied to Joseph Smith, the great prophet of the latter-day!

MANY references could be added to this list as an understanding of the scriptures unfold. See studies on the return of Joseph Smith for more information. We are only scratching the surface on who this mighty prophet truly is. Here are a few introductory studies on Joseph Smith in the bible.

A strong case could be made that Joseph Smith is THE servant spoken of in the book of Isaiah. Additionally, John the Baptist was asked who he was. He said he was not ‘that prophet’ (Christ). He also said he was an Elias, but not ‘that Elias’ who was to come and restore all things. Foretold throughout the generations are prophecies of Christ and his servant: Joseph Smith.

The real answer of course comes as we ask the real question. It isn’t “where is Joseph Smith in the bible?” but “where is the doctrine that God will always call prophets in the bible?”. Once that is established, it doesn’t really matter what the name of modern prophets are, nor need we look for it.

As Jesus Christ wasn’t mentioned in Old Testament but is figure of the New, so is Joseph Smith not mentioned in the New, but is figure of the latter-day. How do God fearing people know that Jesus Christ is the Messiah? Because they read the Old Testament, and read the New Testament, and God told them that both were true. Christ himself said that no one can believe in Him without revelation from the Father (remember that he told Peter ‘flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven). So how does someone know if Joseph Smith is the prophet to lead Christ’s church today? They read the Old Testament, read the New Testament, read the Book of Mormon, and ask if each is true. The Father will indeed reveal that each is true. The saints of God must step by step follow him, and be willing to receive more when He is ready to give! Several scripture passages condemn those who are not willing to receive more of God’s word. Some say ‘I won’t read it so that I won’t be held accountable for what it says’; but

those are guilty of the sin of not being willing to learn. There are 2 sins: not being willing to learn, and the second is not be willing to obey what you have learned. So those hiding from learning to try and not be accountable for further light and truth are already condemned.

-bibles one in hand prophecy of Ezekiel now fulfilled

-Rev. 11 The 2 prophets are fulfilled by Joseph & Hyrum Smith, at least on one level.

-Ezek. The David rule under Jehovah. This is Joseph Smith.

-Joseph in Egypt is a type of Joseph Smith saving the saints in the days preceding the millennium. Many are the prophecies of his return.

-Gen 49 the seed of Joseph shall go over the wall, meaning come to the new world over the ocean; this is where the Book of Mormon takes place; also George Washington put his hand here when he swore into office, which suggests that he, like many others, believed that they were a remnant of Israel in a new promised land.

-Lehi reads in 2 Ne. 2 of a deleted bible passage written by Joseph in Egypt which speaks of a coming JS and JS Jr.

-the bible speaks of a marvelous work and a wonder, this is the gathering which Joseph Smith and his predecessors are executing

-Isaiah speaks of a servant, this is another possible fulfillment, in addition to the Messianic fulfillment

-Jacob 5 teaches a lost bible doctrine of vineyard, the servant potentially being Joseph Smith

-though some of these could be considered to not refer to JS, the way of the Lord is often to give hints and leave the rest to those filled with the spirit of God to discern and prophecy.

-You find no Old Testament mention of Paul the Apostle, despite the epic influence he had on the church from his doctrinal messages. Yet there stands Paul, great testator of Christ!

-Similarly, to how Jews reject scriptural symbols alluding to Christ, so do Protestants and Catholics reject scriptures which allude to Joseph Smith!

-time of restoration of all things

-Amos 3:7

-gave some prophets perfecting the saints Eph.

-Stephen saw the father and the son just as Joseph Smith saw both the Father and the Son.

-the man shall say I cannot read a sealed book

-Rev 14 another angel

- the lion Judah and the unicorn Ephraim being joined
  - out of Zion shall go forth the law
  - dispensation of the fullness of times spoken of in Ephesians is now being fulfilled by Joseph Smith and his predecessors. These things must be fulfilled, and it is up to us to discern how and by whom. The bible doesn't' can't and shouldn't spell out every little detail for us.
  - deleted bible parts such as the book of Joseph in Egypt, part of which is found in the Book of Mormon, refer to Joseph Smith; a man called after the name of Joseph, who would also be a son of Joseph. Indeed Joseph Smith's father was also named Joseph.
  - show how doctrines in the bible are taught by JS which are not taught by others, this shows that JS is of the bible. Ie. Polygamy, 12 apostles, deacons, priests, seventies, high priests, Aaronic priesthood, Melchizedic priesthood, temples, body a temple
  - book of Mormon speaks of biblical doctrines of faith in Christ, baptism, reception of the Holy Ghost, and calls for continued faithfulness for salvation.
  - an Elias to prepare the way of the Lord
  - a falling away first; that fulfilled
  - Moses angels shall declare it 4 corners of the earth – the LDS missionary fleet unmatched in all the world
  - rev. the woman chased into the wilderness
  - 2 witnesses prophecy 1260 days Rev. 11; same time from when JS and HS joint prophets issued call to gather to Zion up to the day of their death
- If we had the records of Joseph in Egypt (yes, some of them appear in the Book of Mormon), he prophesied of a man coming in his name, whose name is also that of his father, who would be the latter-day restorer.

## Teachings of the Presidents of the Church Manual

### Highlights: Joseph Smith

- revelation is here to remain p551
- to get to God we go through Jesus Christ like the ancients did. We do not go through the ancients. p166
- Celestial Kingdoms p531
- soon no peace but in Zion p186
- New Jerusalem come down out of heaven as a bride for her husband p189
- Jesus being so rough they rejected him p202
- make light of the revelations and you will lament it p203
- bible error example p 207
- eternal spirit and always there's been spirits p210
- all can grow in this mortal life (even severely disabled persons) p210
- study the plan of salvation day and night p211
- spirit with body power over those w/o p211
- Lucifer tabernacle of body not having is his punishment p 213
- salvation is to put all our enemies under our feet including death p212
- we have power to resist Satan (else we have no free agency) p213 (aka can't say "the devil made me do it")
- not about how fast you become virtuous, it's about resisting evil. Then you'll be safe.

## Teachings of the Presidents of the Church Manual Highlights: Brigham Young

- all beings in eternity governed by laws. LDS is heaven law. p15
- doctrine we preach is perfect but we as a people are bad as any, the doctrine we preach is calculated to make us heavenly. p21
- for full light need act on every little revealed p22
- Temporal=spiritual; serve God in working (like in a 9-5 sweat shop) p22
- provide for wife and a few children or you've nothing to do with heaven p26
- God sees all p30
- Omnipresence is true via HG, Father sees all p30
- God in 1 place physically at a time p29
- seek not all mysteries but practical service and super power for knowledge and best books. p31
- emulate God alone p32
- w/o the HG, your best will disappoint you p33
- who live with only the bible live in ignorance (see Ch. on Joseph Smith)
- The faithful know that they are in the presence of the Almighty, of angels, and in the midst of eternity.

## Teachings of the Presidents of the Church Manual Highlights: Joseph Fielding Smith

- Pray while at the job and you will probably do everything correctly.
- Asleep or in bed is where people die, and where ambition dies.
- He considered getting up past 6am immoral and woke his children accordingly daily.
- Relief Society work is as important as Priesthood work.
- The Lord's prayer is teaching us to pray for the end of the world. Join with me (Pres. Smith) in praying for this. See the prayer says "thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven". That will be the beginning of a new world, and I want it. I pray for it to come, and ask you all to pray for it with me.
- Past 90 years old he still prayed for the strength to be able to keep his covenants and endure to the end.

## Why God Sometimes Instructs His People to Kill (this might go elsewhere)

Examples of it in the texts:

Joshua bringing Israel into Canaan.

There are really no other examples than this of God's people being asked to kill whole societies including their younglings and women. In the old testament, there are symbols. Everything is a symbol. In fact the Book of Mormon in Alma 34 says that every whit of the law of Moses was to point to Jesus Christ, aka everything. So what could this slaying everything in the wicked city, even the seemingly innocent sheep and other animals, signify? It could signify how in our lives there are certain things that we should have nothing to do with. No hints at pornography. Don't even enter a casino. Don't get angry, lest it led to murder, don't covet lest you steal. Don't even start using drugs lest you get addicted. Don't play around with chastity lest you lose your virtue. Don't even affiliate with apostate groups. We see this is symbolic of having no back doors, no negotiating at the table of my enemy, no pitching my tent toward Sodom, no flirting with the women who aren't of the covenant lest one loose the exalting blessings of the eternal posterity. To be spiritually worthy to enter Gods house, our lives need to be totally clean, every whit. No unrepented sins. The Kingdom of God is not a filthy place; no unclean thing can enter.

It is important to understand that the time period of the Bible was very brutal in the Middle East. So while it's very strange to us, it wasn't necessarily out of the ordinary for that time period.

Wicked societies don't desire to have children, those in Cannan who Israel went to slay may not have had many infants among them.

Also consider that bad things happen to good people sometimes so they can grow

The children of the Cannanites could have had an eternal vendetta against Israelites.

Perhaps if the slaying of the animals could be so that if any of them remained, they would not have inheritance, or to not have the Israelites lusting after property, or being constantly reminded of the wicked ways of the Cannanites, perhaps having them want to turn to the ways of the

Cannanites.

Everything that is written in the Old Testament is symbolic. So, ask yourself the following questions: who were the people that they were commanded to exterminate? What did they represent? Why was it important for that symbolic ideology to not be a part of God's chosen people? etc.

In reference with Moses entering the promised land, The people were practicing the Canaanite religion (which included sacred prostitution in the groves by the priests). The people were corrupt and for the people of Israel not to have a contaminated environment and have a chance to thrive and be successful, everyone needed to be removed. That did not happen. and there began to be intermarriages and corruption of the culture Moses began. Eventually, it became part of their downfall, that and their own sins and disobedience.

To prevent the perpetuation of evil teachings and practices, from father to son, from mother to daughter, and on and on.

Perhaps to stop indiscriminate sinning and thereby, preclude individuals from engaging in further and deeper sinfulness, that would inevitably damn their souls.

In a world where men controlled and determined the conditions of women's and children's lives, perhaps to "rescue" women and children (and some men) from systemic and egregious abuse and mistreatment. Strangely, death, though it can be a harbinger of damnation for some, for others can sometimes be, indeed, merciful.

Study Biblical accounts of Joshua bringing the Israelites into Canaan. I think those narrations will provide you with the answers you are seeking as the Israelites were commanded to wipe out all of the Canaanites who inhabited the land. Particularly look for what they were told to do, and the chastisement they received when they didn't fully destroy the people. Review Nephi's account with Laban. One could consider Nephi to be an Old Testament figure in terms of his culture and when/where he lived. After all, he killed Laban in Jerusalem.

Some good talks to read on this

See link ("Killing Laban, the birth of sovereignty in the Nephite constitutional order" by Val Larsen:

<https://ojs.lib.byu.edu/spc/index.php/JBMRS/article/viewFile/20115/18675>; some of the points made therein pertain to Nephi acting as a political sovereign establishing his reign, as is often done in political violence, the slaying of an abusive political foe as an act of taking them over, etc;

See also this link (“Legal Perspectives on the slaying of Laban” by John W. Welch):

<https://ojs.lib.byu.edu/spc/index.php/JBMRS/article/viewFile/19665/18232>

God sees mortality as a short time, he may see it as better for those people not to live

God punishes the sins of the people upon their children to the 3rd and 4th generation (this doesn't mean the children are accountable personally for sins of their parents, it merely means that their lives are going to be harder because of those things; their eternal salvation is always up to their own choosing, and God won't tempt anyone more than they are able to resist, and God will take handicaps into account in the judgement day God has power to slay for his own reasons (namely the wickedness of the people). Israel is becoming like God, and having them slay others could be a trial of their faith, a way of proving them. Israelites are to become like God.

This is a hard question, philosophers have been trying to answer it for millennia.

God gives people hard trials, very hard. These are called “Abrahamic trials”. Joseph Smith said that everyone will have to pass through a trial of this level, or they can't be exalted. Joseph Smith said it would be ludicrous to think that we could dwell with Christ and Heavenly Father without having gone through immensely hard things.

Accounts of “Abrahamic trials” we know of

Abe to slay his son Issac

After showing willingness, Abraham was released from the requirement Joseph Smith to administer poison to his wife Emma

After showing willingness, brother Smith was released from the requirement

John Taylor to give his wife to be a plural wife for Joseph Smith

After showing willingness, brother Taylor was released from the requirement

We keep our faith in our loving Heavenly Father despite not having all of the answers.

We can still live in a house despite not having inspected every nail in it or having a perfect knowledge of construction, landscaping, engineering, and all the social statistics of the neighborhood.

Killing wicked societies in those days may have been culturally more acceptable

Destroying a nation doesn't necessarily mean that you are annihilating every person in the city, it means that you are wrecking the structure of that society. (Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, p. 239)

Joseph Smith said that the Kingdom of God is governed on the principle of revelation: when God says to do something, we do it.

At times the Lord says thou shalt not kill, at other times he says thou shalt utterly destroy.

God knows the beginning from the end, we do not. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.

the word for "kill" in "thou shalt not kill", in Hebrew is "murder". There are separate words for kill and murder in Hebrew. Here the world murder is what is forbidden.

The word murder has the sence of anger and revenge, whereas killing doesn't.

Those who have been destroyed it has been foretold to them by the prophets of the Lord (2 Ne. 25:9).

We don't know all the answers of the past, but so far as the future goes, the scriptures show that the destructions of the last days will be done by plagues, and wicked people. That the wicked will slay the wicked.

My BYU Book of Mormon professor Kerry Hull PhD in Mesoamerican studies points out that like pruning a tree, one must get rid of the dead parts, so they don't hinder the growth of what you want to grow so that maximum fruit is produced. Once the branches are pruned, you can't just leave them on the ground, you must BURN them, so that they won't suck up nutriaents from the ground which steals from the good tree, or so they have no chance of growing into corrupt trees. Read Jacob 5, it shows how God gives all the mercy he possibly can.

the children of an extremely wicked society could be psychologically programed in such a dreadful way, that there is no chance for them, and God is putting them out of their misery by slaying them. Think of the Cananites: they were so wicked, so so wicked, slaying the children themselves and all manner of sin. They were the worst of worst. Extreme wickedness. God had to "clean house" there, and wipe all of this out, and get things ready for a different civilization there.

Indeed, with the Cananites, there is that rare case where Israel was not just to destroy a nation, but to annihilate them, not leaving any living thing behind. Even the women and younglings. This is very rare. God was clearing ground there for it to be a land for Israel.

with Jonah, he prophecies that they would be destroyed, but they

repented, so God changed the prophecy. God looks for ways to spare us, not for ways to condemn us.

with the flood of Noah, we see this as an act of mercy. The wicked were getting too much in the way of the righteous. It is mercy toward the righteous. The wicked deserve what God gives them, and the righteous deserve likewise what God gives to them.

## Book of Mormon Heartland Geography

The main reason I subscribe to the heartland geography for Book of Mormon events is the prophetic promises within the book itself. Repeatedly it identifies the USA as the promised land, the most prosperous land, and the same land in which the events of the book occurred. The reason the USA is so prosperous is because it is the promised land.

It is where Adam and early prophets lived until the flood of Noah, which relocated the house of faith to the east. Then the Book of Mormon peoples came to this promised land as a choice blessing. All those who come to this land come here by the hand of the Lord.

Missouri is the location of Adam-Ondi-Ahman, and will be where the New Jerusalem is built.

Joseph Smith, who saw the Nephites in vision, identified the USA as the place of Book of Mormon events.

### Why Not Mesoamerica?

I do not subscribe to the meso America theory of Book of Mormon geography as reported by John Lund, John Sorenson, & many at the BYU. Just because cultures climates etc. in one area show some amount of correlating evidence with the Book of Mormon doesn't mean similar things couldn't have been going on in the other area.

I've taken classes from those who teach the meso-America model, and find their evidences to be wholly lacking when compared with those of the heartland theory.

The Hill Cumorah was in New York, and those who try to place the book's events in central or southern Utah must deal with that fact by saying there were two Hill Cumorah's.

The primary evidence for the heartland model is the words of the book of Mormon, indicating that their land was to be the great promised land. The USA is the obvious fit.

### Resources on Book of Mormon culture / geography studies:

Rod Meldrum [BookofMormonEvidence.com](http://BookofMormonEvidence.com). His Annotated Book of Mormon is a printing of the Book of Mormon with evidences of the heartland model throughout the text, and is a tremendous resource.  
John Neville

Willard Bean

Hugh Nibley – Hebrew, Arabic, Egyptology insights

Stephen Ricks – Hebrew & Arabic insights

Stoddard's at the [JosephSmithFoundation.org](http://JosephSmithFoundation.org)

## Basic Q & A On Being A Latter-day Saint

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How does making right choices help us make more right choices?

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What has helped develop greater harmony in your home?

How has The Book of Mormon helped you understand the purpose of life?

What is hope and what do you hope for?

Please share your feelings/testimony of the Restoration of the Gospel.

Can you talk about the missions of the Church and your participation in them?

What blessings have come through your faith in Jesus Christ?

How I live my faith

### Why I am a Latter-day Saint

My faith is what helps me to walk with a smile on my face. It helps guide me in the choices I have to make every day.

Growing up, we read from the scriptures, including The Book of Mormon, and prayed daily as a family. We went to church weekly, and helped serve our neighbors family and friends. When I moved out of the home, I kept doing that because I knew it was true. It helped strengthen

my testimony that the teachings of the church as found in The Book of Mormon are true, and that I really could find power to do good by repenting of my sins, and leaning upon The Lord.

It's good to have a solid foundation where I know God loves me, and that He speaks to me through prayer, parents, and teachings of the modern-day prophet.

I believe the church is true, and that God founded it as He did in Christ's time. I'm not afraid to face the future because I know God will guide me every step of the way. I know this church is true.

I have studied about this and I have felt the witness of the Spirit that these accounts are true as I do and pray. The church is where just about all the blessings in my life come from. The Spirit continues to testify to me that he was Joseph Smith was a prophet, and that his successors are as well.

My grandpa read the Joseph Smith pamphlet and knew it was true. From his choice I've had the gospel in my life.

How has the Holy Ghost helped you?

After being baptized, I received the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands by one holding the Priesthood authority of God (Acts 8:15-17). Since that special day, I have had a great need for the guidance of the Holy Ghost. I believe my ability to remember the importance of daily scripture study is from the whisperings of the Holy Ghost. When I pray, I am filled with ideas on how to live more peaceably, and to be a better influence on those around me. I also feel comfort and the presence of The Lord. I know these are from the Holy Ghost. As a missionary, I prayerfully determine who I should see and where I should go, and miracles happen because of it. For example, I felt like a particular door we walked past that we should talk to them. We did, and found the person there was in great need of our help. That strengthened my faith that God knows His children and will take care of them. When I'm in a situation where I would otherwise react impatiently, The Holy Ghost whispers to me to love one another as Jesus loves me. I know that I've received answers to my prayers day to day in the bigger and smaller matters of my life. I am confident that I will be guided all my days by the influence of the Holy Ghost so long as I am faithful to the commandments of The Lord which I covenanted with Him to obey when I was baptized.

What are you doing to help strengthen your family and make it successful?

I write them letters encouraging them to be faithful when I have to be away. I'm always trying to improve so I can be a greater light for my family, and I'm always trying to learn more about and better live the gospel of Jesus Christ so the light I hold up can be Jesus Christ. I try to live within my means, not complain, led by example with patience and love, and I keep my family in my prayers every day.

How has the Book of Mormon brought you closer to God?

I love the Book of Mormon! I remember mother reading it to us every night growing up. I could always feel the power of that wonderful book, and recognize the importance of it as we read from its pages. Growing older, the Book of Mormon became a serious topic of study as I lived on my own and needed to know how to follow Jesus Christ. I remember having heard the stories of Book of Mormon prophets who had overcome their challenges, and that empowered me with the faith that with God's help I could likewise overcome by challenges. I learned from the Book of Mormon that God loves all of His children, and they can always come home to Him no matter what.

On my mission, the Book of Mormon has been helping me understand the doctrine of Christ so I can teach that to others. Understanding the workings of God in ancient America as well as ancient Jerusalem have helped me to understand God's plan of salvation for us His children. I find often very specific messages from The Lord to me as I read the Book of Mormon daily. I read all the scriptures, but the Book of Mormon is a particular treasure to me. Knowing that it is true by The Holy Ghost allows me to know that Joseph Smith is a prophet of The Lord in our day, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is The Lord's kingdom once again established on the earth preparatory to the second coming of The Messiah. This is an anchor to my soul, knowing that there is a living prophet on the earth. Knowing that what I hear at church is the word of The Lord.

Reading of the faithful accounts of Book of Mormon prophets inspires me to render more faithful service to The Lord, and then I work more closely associated with The Lord as I serve His children.

Think about your everyday activities. What are things you act upon each day where you cannot see the end results? How does faith move you to action?

I pray, read the scriptures, serve others, teach the gospel, serve as a missionary free of charge, I give people the benefit of a doubt and do all I can for them. Faith moves me to act like this because I believe these

things will bring them to God where all happiness is. I believe we can be together in God's Kingdom if we help each other get there and eternally enjoy that.

Could you talk about your baptism?

I was 8, I remember my family was very happy, and I knew I was doing the right thing by being baptized. It was peaceful.

Please explain the part prayer plays in your life?

I pray when I wake up, at meals, when I go to bed, and before I do things for The Lord.

When I'm distressed I pray, then comfort and sometimes answers come.

Why do Latter-day Saints go on missions?

I went on a mission, so I've some good insight on this one. We love the message we've been blessed with, the fullness of the gospel. I would do anything to promote that to other people. It is the foundation of my soul, and I can attribute every blessing that has come to me in life to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The prophets of our day have long called all worthy young men to prepare to serve missions. They have and still do teach that missionary service is a Priesthood duty. Jeremiah 16:16 teaches us that The Lord will send missionaries, as well as teachings from the New Testament. The Book of Mormon has many accounts of great missionaries who taught the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ancient inhabitants of what is now known as the Americas.

When I learned that Jesus Christ had power to redeem me through prayerfully reading The Book of Mormon, I made every preparation necessary to serve a full-time mission. There is no message that has ever brought me greater joy!

We believe that the same church which existed primitively in New Testament times has been restored in its fullness through a living prophet Joseph Smith. That he prayed to find the true church and had a vision where he saw God the Father and His Only Begotten Son Jesus Christ. They called him to be a prophet and gave him power and authority by sending angels to him. What a glorious message! There is a living prophet on the earth today, President Thomas S. Monson, the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

When we were baptized, we covenanted with God that we would "mourn with those that mourn, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all

places that ye may be in, even until death... that ye may have eternal life.” See Mosiah 18:8-10 in The Book of Mormon.

The blessings of Abraham are ours only if we carry the gospel to all the families of the earth. This is our covenant with God.

How has attending Church services helped you?

My favorite part of Church services is when the sacramental bread and water are passed each Sunday. I remember the promises I have made with Jesus Christ, and what He has promised me in return. That gives me great things to look forward to, and calm my natural tendencies to crave the things of this world. I remember that Jesus Christ can and will forgive me as I try to follow Him as He has asked me to do. “Come follow me” He said. I moved some ten times in my teenage life, and making new friends has been important in every place. Church has helped me to find friends with the same values I have. Sunday school at church on Sundays has helped me to understand the doctrine, and that has changed my behavior more than the study of behavior has changed my behavior, just like the prophets said it would. Now I understand why the apostles met together on a weekly basis to eat bread in remembrance of Jesus Christ, and why it was so important to these people to be no more strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints. I remember in ancient America, from The Book of Mormon, that they spoke one with another concerning the welfare of their souls as they met once a week, I see just how strongly that can affect the rest of the week. I feel rejuvenated each week after attending church, and I don’t know how I would get through or enjoy the week without it. Growing up, attending the nursery and primary Sundays at Church services helped me learn scripture stories and develop a strong moral character from an early age. It helped me to know that we keep the Sabbath day holy by church attendance, and serving each other, yet resting from the week’s labors. My testimony has grown as I’ve had opportunities to teach the youth and others in church services, and I can never repay The Lord for that. It’s like the prophets say, you can’t give a bread crumb in The Kingdom of God without receiving a loaf of bread in return.

What have you done successfully to shield your family from unwanted influences?

We read the scriptures every night together, then we say a family prayer before we go to bed. We reserve Monday nights for family night, we call it Family Home Evening throughout the church. In Family Home Evening we spend time together, teach each other the gospel, and

counsel together. In my family we go out of our way to plan camp-outs and picnics, so our lives are filled with wholesome things, and we have a lot of joy! We follow the prophet's admonition to not watch 'R' rated films, to avoid violent video games, and any obscene material that will not allow the Spirit of The Lord to be in our home. We have yearly family reunions to keep close to our extended family, and build off of each others goodness. We value making the most of an education, and being where we are supposed to be when we are supposed to be there. I'm thankful my mother didn't allow any of her 8 children to have sleepovers with anyone accept family, there is too much that could go wrong there. The Lord says he worketh not in darkness, I don't see a need for young people to either. Mother taught us the gospel as we would drive in the car together, and vulgar music was never tolerated. I'm thankful mother never allowed us to have a personal computer or television in our homes growing up, that is another thing the prophets have warned us against. We have pictures of the Savior or a temple in our home in every room, that is another thing the prophets have urged us to do. Our home is a sanctuary from the storm. A holy place where we feel loved, belonging, safe, and The Lord's Spirit. I'm thankful mother gave us chores to do each day that filled our time with good contributions to the family. She also made sure we had a bedtime, and tucked us in every night. Our family is full of culture and tradition that fill me up, and help me to not have the need for unwanted things to bring me happiness.

Please share your feelings/testimony of Joseph Smith.

I know Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. That has been challenged by others and my own contemplating in the past- but I've come to know by the power of The Holy Ghost that he was who he says he was. He saw what he said he saw. He founded what he said he founded. Nothing can take that testimony away from me. I know the church he organized was under the direction of Jesus Christ The Promised Messiah, and that Jesus stands at the head of this His great church today. I know this church is true as sure as I know that I live, and I will live and if needs be, die for it. Joseph Smith wasn't a perfect man, but he was called of God to do a great work, and establish the restitution of all things as spoken of in the New Testament. The kingdom which would roll forth and eventually fill the earth as prophesied in Daniel 2. Joseph Smith was called of God the same that Noah, Moses, Jesus Christ, Peter, and other holy prophets from the beginning of time have been called and commissioned of God, with

the mandate to dispense the Everlasting Gospel to the inhabitants of the earth. I stand with Joseph Smith as he made the following declaration, “The standard of truth has been erected. No unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing. Persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly nobly and independent till it has penetrated every nation, swept every country, visited every clime, and sounded in every ear. Till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and The Great Jehovah shall say, “The work is done.””

Praise to the man, Joseph Smith, who communed with Jehovah. Jesus anointed that prophet and seer.

The testimony of The Living Christ that I received when I read The Book of Mormon, which Joseph Smith claimed to translate into the English language by the gift and power of God, is so through and unmistakable, that I know Joseph Smith was a true prophet of the Living God.

Why/How do you share the gospel with your friends?

I like to invite my friends to meet with the missionaries, to read The Book of Mormon, to come to church, to do fun activities, and I like to be friends with everyone. No one deserves to be made fun of or to be left alone. I share the gospel with my friends because I know I can't understand all of their trials, but there is one who can, that is Jesus Christ. It's not that I don't listen to and counsel with my friends, heaven forbid- but I know that if I can strengthen their faith in Jesus Christ, they will become much more independent, and have a greater level of peace and joy. I use The Book of Mormon as a primary tool in that effort because it mentions The Savior Jesus Christ about every 3 verses. I use the bible as well, but primarily The Book of Mormon. It is something most do not already have. It is something that helped me understand the doctrine of Christ in a simple yet profound way. I like to do service like tutoring in school or helping people move. Things that one can't do all on their own very easily or at all. Christ came as he that serveth, what a better way to help people know about Jesus Christ than trying to be like Him.

Which of the Savior's teachings have influenced you in your life?

“Jesus sayeth unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die...” John 11:25-26

I reap several influential messages from these words of The Master. I've lost many loved ones, and knowing that we shall all live again brings me comfort that the world cannot afford.

As we believe in Christ, we will have a better quality of life and eternity. We won't become stagnant, or unforgivable. We will progress growing brighter until the perfect day. We will be empowered to do good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven. According to the scriptures, we will become as He is as we live His gospel. That is the miracle of Jesus Christ. He takes us imperfect beings, and makes us perfect through His grace divine. Perfection will not be reached in this life, but we are promised that it will eventually as we live His gospel.

Reinstated in The Book of Mormon, we hear the words of Jesus Christ again, speaking to the Nephites, His "other sheep... which are not of this fold..." (John 10:16) shortly after His resurrection, "Now this is the commandment: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day. Verily, verily, I say unto you, this is my gospel; and ye know the things that ye must do in my church; for the works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do; for that which ye have seen me do even that shall ye do; Therefore, if ye do these things blessed are ye, for ye shall be lifted up at the last day." 3 Nephi 27: 20-22.

The Savior said in our day through the prophet Joseph Smith, that as we live faithfully the gospel, the same organization which exists among us here (families) will exist among us there in the Kingdom of God. That helps knowing that my family can be together forever.

#### How can your talents and gifts bless others?

The prophets teach us that the home is where we render the most important service.

I remember so many great things from my family growing up that have shaped who I am. I can use my gifts and talents to bless my family now, and pass on our traditions and beliefs. I can teach my family to work, like I learned from my family. One of my gifts is that I know this church is true. I can bless others with that by doing what we call home teaching. Every male member of the church is assigned several individuals or families to watch over and share a monthly message with. The Church publishes a magazine called the Ensign, in which the First Presidency of The Church conveys a message they want everyone to hear that month. We share this with the families we're assigned to. This program makes it

so that everyone in the church is watching over someone, and is being watched over by someone else. My children will need a testimony of their own, so I can read the scriptures with them daily and explain them. I can pray for them and with them and teach them to pray daily. In anything we're involved in, what ever our interests be, doing so in an upright manner, setting a good example, will help bless others. Being a good example is one of the most effective ways to bless others.

How does making right choices help us make more right choices?

It's like a song we sing in Church, "Choose the right let the consequence follow." Jesus taught the Nephites, "Be thou perfect, even as I or your Father which is in heaven is perfect." In The Book of Mormon Jesus Christ teaches, "And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for it they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them." Ether 12:27.

How has your knowledge of the Plan of Happiness changed/benefited your life?

I discovered there was a Redeemer prepared, from the foundation of the earth, who could help me overcome all things, for He already had. I'm not perfect, but hopeful for that day, and enjoying life, living Christ's teachings.

What has helped develop greater harmony in your home?

We sing a hymn and that helps a lot. Grandpa would speak up and the patriarch of the home since dad was elsewhere, and there would come peace. It was given to my brother and I to "one divide, and the other choose" said mother, when it came to chores and chocolate. He helped me with my homework, we played games together, and prayed and studied the scriptures daily as a family. My mother told us stories about our family history, those legacies of faith hope and charity. These things helped us know who we are, and helped us to act our part. Going to church on Sundays would always bring a sweet Spirit into our home. I remember every Sunday morning I would wake up to gospel music playing, and usually a treat mother had prepared. Looking back, the daily chores we were assigned by mother brought us closer together as a family. My brother and I had to live by the same rules. Mother never forced us to do anything, yet certain privileges were revoked upon naughtiness, and certain blessings revoked as well. Mother often sang us to sleep. Our older siblings played with us, and their visits were ever

awaited. We served in the church together and grew closer there. Those blessings carried over into our home. We did fun wholesome recreational activities together, we had gardens, and always a project to work on in the home or the yard. Mother liked to give us gifts like rabbits, chicks, and other animals. Mother always had a dinner she made for us but never forced us to eat it. We got to take care of grandpa and abide in service. Grandpa taught us his life lessons he learned which blessed us richly. Our Home teachers in the Church coming to see us monthly and sometimes more always brought a spirit of love and peace. Scout leaders, young men's leaders, and countless other volunteer leaders in the church helped us in uncountable ways. They cared for us as their own. I have such a great debt to repay all my life for such blessings.

How has The Book of Mormon helped you understand the purpose of life?

In The Book of Mormon, I read as soon as I moved away from home, about how this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God. As I read that, I felt like I lived in heaven long ago, and that the right thing, and the happy thing, for me to do in this life, would be to be good, and to raise a good family, and help others. I read about how Jesus is the promised Redeemer, and that helped me see that I can learn from my mistakes and not be condemned for them as I pick myself up and pray for God's help.

What is hope and what do you hope for?

Hope is a longing for the brighter day, an expectation of the way things need to be in order for that day to come. A trust that a taste of it will be granted today.

I hope to be with my family eternally. That when I die, I can hear the words of my King Jesus Christ saying, "Well done thou good and faithful servant. Enter ye into the rest of thy Lord." "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

I hope for those I train to live good lives. Someday that hope will entail the children I'll have. I hope that I can live true to the faith for which martyrs like Jesus Christ and Joseph Smith have perished, true to the truth which my fathers have cherished.

I hope to follow the pathway of discipleship following Jesus Christ until I become like Him by His grace.

I hope for world peace, and have faith that it will come. I have charity for the world to help bring that to pass, and I'll ever serve my brothers and sisters anywhere and anyone.

I hope to answer well to the prophets of old, of how I have done with their words. An ancient American prophet Nephi said in the record called The Book of Mormon, "...you and I shall stand face to face before his bar; and ye shall know that I have been commanded of him to write these things, notwithstanding my weakness. And I pray the Father in the name of Christ that many of us, if not all, may be saved in his kingdom at that great and last day." 2 Nephi 33:11.

My hope is like Moroni's, an ancient prophet whose writings are contained in The Book of Mormon, "I soon go to rest in the paradise of God, until my spirit and body shall again reunite, and I am brought forth triumphant through the air, to meet you before the pleasing bar of the great Jehovah, the Eternal Judge of both quick and dead. Amen." Moroni 10:34.

With this hope, I can do it. I know, like Nephi, the ancient American prophet, that the Lord will provide the way for me to obey him 1 Nephi 3:7.

Please share your feelings/testimony of the Restoration of the Gospel.

I feel the restoration of the Gospel, as individuals take it in, it will be the restoration of themselves. Of their hope and joy! Of their childhood dreams and testimonies that no one could take away! I have a testimony that the gospel has been restored as it was fully here when Jesus taught, so is it now, and not a part is missing, and it is found in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

No organization which does good is of evil, I mean merely to say that there is more, there is a fullness of truth available. Bring what treasured truths you have and come and see if we can add to them.

We always are learning throughout life, right? Allow yourself to study this, and see if it is not from God. You can know it is by the power of The Holy Ghost as you study it and ask your Father in Heaven concerning its validity. He will let you know it is His church, then you can hold to it and grow throughout your life exponentially by following the guidance of a living prophet, an authorized representative of Jesus Christ who speaks with Him face to face as did the prophets of old like Moses (Exodus 33:11) and Peter. I would hope that all would have an open heart to this message. If it is true, and I testify that it is, then there is a way that it will fit to the needs of every one of our Heavenly Father's children, including you, my brother/sister of our Father in heaven who created us, and anxiously awaits our return to his presence in heaven, and to see us grow and learn more of his plan for us day by day.

The beautiful thing about this message is that it is true, and God will back it up with The Holy Ghost if it is true. The Holy Ghost is a personage of the Godhead, a member without flesh and bones as the other 2 of the godhead have, so he can dwell inside of you, and bring those special unexplainable feelings that come to you as you study this message, that hint to you, 'it's true!'

The best part is that Jesus Christ explains anew how he loves us.

Can you talk about the missions of the Church and your participation in them?

The missions of the church are three-fold: To preach the gospel, to perfect the saints, and to redeem the dead.

[when in the mission field full time I wrote:] I'm on a full-time mission preaching the gospel. My purpose on my full-time mission is to invite others to come unto Christ by helping them receive the restored gospel through faith in Jesus Christ and His atonement, repentance, baptism, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.

I spend some of my mission teaching people who have fallen away or need strengthening.

I've been able to go home teaching monthly since I was 14 to teach members of my local congregation the prophet's monthly message to help perfect the saints.

I've been attending the temple since I was 12 to redeem the dead by performing proxy baptisms for them (See 1 Corinthians 15:29). This gives them who have died without the opportunity to be baptized the opportunity to receive that ordinance.

In the future when I am not on a full-time mission I'll raise a righteous family, continue to share the gospel, and continue to redeem the dead through doing temple work for my ancestors who lived at times when the fullness of the gospel was not available to them.

What blessings have come through your faith in Jesus Christ?

Positivity, hope, charity, direction, daily inspiration, an understanding of where I came before this life, the purpose of life, and where I will go after I die. I've come closer to my family, and learned what kind of friend to be. I've found forgiveness for my sins, and felt alleviated because of that.

My faith in Jesus Christ brought me out on a full-time mission, that has been a blessing to me because I've had the joy of helping others fix their families and enjoy life by teaching them the gospel and inviting them to live it.

As I do what Jesus said to by keeping one day of 7 holy, I feel peace and comfort throughout the week.

As I do as Jesus said by paying one tenth of my wages to tithing, and giving offerings, I have never had want for food, and have always had sufficient for my needs.

As I refrain from contention as Jesus taught to, what I think are issues fall away and I'm able to become a better person and live a happier life.

As I live chaste as Jesus taught to, I have more self-confidence and a clearer look on how to raise a family, and brighter hope for a united and happy family of my own in the future.

As I don't steal and be wise living within my means as Jesus taught, I learn to use my resources better and am happier.

As I don't covet other people or things as Jesus taught, I learn that there is available joy in hoping for heaven, and I can get through even the toughest situations like having to stand alone when no one will live up to the standard Jesus Christ calls me to.

As I pray to God the Father in the name of Christ as Jesus taught, I feel direction, comfort, peace, hope, and solice just to name a few.

As I "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness", "all things" are "added unto me." Matthew 6:33.

I would be lost without my faith in Jesus Christ. Before I had it I was. Now that I have it, I'm found. In this, The Lord's church, I trust He will guide me through prophets all through my life.

#### How I live my faith

I've lived my faith by reading the scriptures and learning to believe Jesus Christ can redeem me, repenting of my sins, being baptized, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end. I am learning God's plan for me from the scriptures, and from going to Sunday services at church. I've had the opportunity to teach and serve in the church full time. I'll raise my children, teach them from the scriptures daily, help them enjoy living a righteous life, and seek to be a good influence on others in the work place and the community as I serve there. I'll continue to make the most of an education so I can further bless my family church community and the world. In my home is where I'll do the most good. I keep a daily journal to recognize the hand of the Lord in my day to day life.

## Suggestions for Bishops

These are of course suggestions. A bishop can't "ban" these things, but can teach true principles, over and over, and make the will of God clear, and hope that the saints heed.

### **Sections:**

Food

Callings

Sacrament Meeting

Testimony Meeting

Dress

Cry Repentance

Missionary Work

### **FOOD:**

Wheat bread for sacrament

Carrot baggies as treats for kids after church instead of toxic junk candies

No junk food & candy at youth activities and church classes

Remind members before church socials to focus on the word of wisdom in what they serve, such as avoiding meat, and focusing on grain fruit and vegetable.

### **CALLINGS:**

Fill all callings immediately.

Don't use the same people over and over to fill key callings. Let others, even inactives, have an opportunity. If someone is failing at a calling (ie. Not showing up to church, doing nothing), release them without delay after confronting them on the matter.

Avoid calling the young men "the priesthood," they bare it, they aren't it.

### **SACRAMENT MEETING:**

No reading talks (no one read their talk). Say it from your heart. Refer to notes here and there, but show us that this is in your heart, not just something you're doing because you were told to.

Invite all to sit close to the front. Once President Packer asked a BYU congregation to please move closer to the front. Time passed and no one did. He stood up and said, "I can teach you nothing." And walked out. Don't feel a need to stick to a rigid schedule for sacrament meeting. Don't assign speaking topics, let the spirit guide. Bishops and their counselors should frequently preach, not just on fast Sundays. If they feel a topic needs to be addressed, they should do so themselves rather than assigning it to someone. No kids (under 8) giving talks at sacrament meeting, it's the wrong setting; have them do so in primary.

### **TESTIMONY MEETING:**

No "thankimonies". Train them regularly on this. The purpose is to witness of revealed truth.

Children under 8 have no need to get up and say what their parents are whispering in their ears, and it doesn't edify the body of Christ.

Call on people to bear testimony, can in advance or in the spot.

Limit the frequency of the people baring testimony to about once every 3 months max.

If more women than men bare testimony, call on the men by name. Elder Bednar promised growth of wards if the men will bare testimony.

Warn members don't say "I would be ungrateful if I didn't bare my testimony today" etc. That may be true but you can't say that, it makes others uncomfortable, and can be overbearing. It suggests that everyone who didn't get up is ungrateful, and that isn't true. Even if it is true of some people, we don't need to point that out.

### **DRESS:**

Beg the sisters to not wear tight form fitting dresses to church, read them quotes against such. Also monitor the dress standards at church activities, namely ones that take place at the church. The youth leaders should act in the place of a parent. If there is a repeating issue with someone and modesty, that person should be approached about the issue.

### **CRY REPENTANCE:**

Invite members to live higher standards. Religion these days is too comfortable.

### **MISSIONARY WORK:**

Assign members to make specific invitations to specific families.

Get a report of ministry assignments, and chastise the body and the individual if no efforts are being made.

## Yes, Seek Mysteries, & Here are Some Parameters

When you have theories, and the prophet says he has a revelation and its against your understanding of a mystery and you can drop yours, that's fine. You SHOULD seek the mysteries. If you're willing to be wrong when you're wrong, you are good to keep going on with your theories. Paul H Dunn said it. Told antis its ok to have own opinion just don't say its revelation for the church or insist on it to others. Jer 17:5 trust not the arm of flesh or cursed.

An anti-Mormon vs an active Mormon is that the active gets his prayers answered.

## Hugh Nibley: Pros and Cons (Mostly Pros)

### **Pros:**

- Held to the truth that the Book of Mormon was miraculous and true history, that Joseph Smith was an inspired revelatory prophet. He went to a meeting of the Swearing Elders (Leonard Arrington's gang of progressive church scholars), and was appalled by their denouncing of the prophetic history of the church.
- Great at debating non-latter-day saints about the validity of Joseph Smith, The Book of Mormon, etc. He was appalled when he met with other scholars who didn't believe in the literal 1<sup>st</sup> Vision of Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon as history of real people, etc.
- Brilliant analysis of scripture, antiquity, the Egyptian temple endowment, early Christianity, the world of the near east, the teachings of Brigham Young, Abraham, and many other topics.
- He was a good steward of his time and talents, and often toiled late into the night searching out the mysteries of God.
- Wasn't emotional in his teaching method, but had a lecture style which delivered a lot of information without being slow about it.
- Nibley longed for Zion. He powerfully rebuked the Babylon culture which we saints so often support. He asked his bishop permission to live the law of consecration.
- Nailed it on the Word of Wisdom: that God doesn't exactly require abstinence from meats, but that those who do abstain will receive a special blessing.
- Had a large family.

### **Cons:**

- Leaned toward socialism, "free lunch", etc.
- Taught the flood of Noah was only local
- Taught pre-Adamic people lived, that Adam evolved from lower lifeforms, believed in evolution
- Espoused the view of Meso-American Book of Mormon geography.
- Often had long writings on tangents and only put his opinions hidden toward the end.

-May have touted his own wisdom in his rambling on about sources, citing scholars, etc.

**Conclusion:**

I find his works very useful if one has the discernment to reject his false ideas, and hold to the truths he taught. Someone as brilliant as he was should have seen through the falsehoods of evolution, and it is to his shame that he believed scholars over God's word on that account. It is incumbent upon every intelligent thinker to rise above the false liberal doctrines of our time. He remains to me a beloved teacher, but I think he should not be worshipped as we have a tendency to worship scholars in the church rather than using personal revelation to understand the mysteries of God. Nibley is one to be imitated in most of his views and approach.

## On the Doctrinal Validity of Joseph Smith Papers, Journal of Discourses, “Saints” Histories, Private Journals, Etc.

**Brigham Young** taught that his sermons and those of his brethren were to be taken as scripture, just as much as those in the standard works. This of course is true when it holds true to the doctrines established in the standard works. Living oracles are indeed more important than written scripture, as relying only on written scripture from the past has often resulted in apostacy from truth and light.

Here is the quote:

“I know just as well what to teach this people and just what to say to them and what to do in order to bring them into the celestial kingdom . . . I have never yet preached a sermon and sent it out to the children of men, that they may not call Scripture. Let me have the privilege of correcting a sermon, and it is as good Scripture as they deserve. The people have the oracles of God continually. I say now, when they [his discourses] are copied and approved by me they are as good Scripture as is couched in this Bible . . . ” (Journal of Discourses, vol. 13, p. 264; see also p. 95).

It could be said of the **Journal of Discourses** like we say of the bible: it is true as far as it is translated (recorded) correctly. JD by and large is scripture, but some have said the scribes who recorded those sermons were sometimes in error. The church said that they see the JD as having error. Brigham Young did say that his sermons were to be taken as scripture if he could review the recording of them. Some were taken in short hand and later expanded, some were better note takers than others. All of this said, I find the JD to be extremely valuable and to be held in high esteem. Antis hold up some things from JD to poke at the church, and we are aware that there is a possibility of error.

**JSP: Joseph Smith papers** are edited by unbiased liberal academics who sometimes leave out important topics. They also include many bad sources. Just because someone says something is from JSP doesn't mean its correct.

**Saints:** This history often has dots (...) between things. What was between those dots? It is often things which the liberal church historians don't want said. Some things taught by Joseph Smith simply

don't match with the current narrative, such as the condemnation of evolutionary theory, the place of Book of Mormon geography being in the modern day USA, the doctrine of plural marriage being the celestial standard, etc. Despite the Lord calling the American Indians the Lamanites at least 3 times in the D&C, the Saints book stubbornly refuses to ever call them that, or to acknowledge the scriptural view on such.

**Private Journals:** It is common knowledge that Joseph Smith didn't get to teach everything he wanted in public. A review of journals shows his private teachings to many which expound upon his public teachings in significant detail and give the reader a much better view. Hyrum Andrus is one who has had an advantage of a more careful study of these journals.

The scripture says we ought to wear out our lives in searching for truth, surely this search takes us beyond the standard works. We cannot claim ignorance of these resources in our age of ease of access to these materials, and our wealth (dishwashers, laundry machines, indoor plumbing, running water, electricity, automobiles) which enable us to be the generation who has greater doctrinal understanding than any past generation. Are we living up to this duty? Of course not. Few to none do. The way to life is narrow indeed!

## Popular Speaker Rebuking The Saints for Utah Statistics? Wrong Audience, & Wrong Approach

It seems a popular sport these days for popular general authorities, scholars, or other ‘renown’ speakers to show up at a spiritual Saturday night stake conference session, and roast those present for Utah statistics on pornography use, anti-depressant use (actually they don’t roast us for that but it’s popular in Utah), and other lowly Utah statistics.

Don’t they realize that those who show to Saturday night stake conference aren’t the scum of society, and don’t really need a scathing rebuke along those lines?

Don’t they realize that only about 1/3 of Utahns are latter-day saints, and that even less of those are the active members who show up to these conferences?

Why can’t these scholars and charismatic leaders come up with some independent ideas, something uplifting to say? Sadly, often their remarks are just virtue signaling us to not be evil racists, and other non-issues among the active members of the church.

It is no longer appropriate to associate Utah statistics with the church. It is demeaning to the church to do so.

Lastly, even if there is an epidemic problem in the active church members as they say, instead of just raking us under the coals, they could and should teach us the glorious doctrines of the kingdom which excite the soul toward God and repentance rather than just saying how bad something is.

Jacob and others say they he had to use lots of warnings of hell to get his people to live right, that nothing else worked on them, but that’s not where it stops, and there’s more to it.

## Orson Pratt: Mostly Great, a Few Concerns

His patriarchal blessing is included in the D&C. His blessing urges him to prophesy, and he mentions this in his writings but said he never did.

There were several things he taught, such as the earth and creatures being millions of years old. He also latched on to mesoamerican ideas and taught that they were Book of Mormon peoples. Also accused the prophet Joseph Smith of making advances toward his wife and left the church for a short time. His wife actually had an affair with John C. Bennett who was in the First Presidency, and who apostatized right after his affair.

Good guy but known to speculate on a whim. He also opposed Brigham Young on his Adam-God theory, but recanted twice to keep his position in the Quorum of the Twelve. I read that this was due to him believing that the scriptural "mud-baby" creation of Adam was accurate, but I need to confirm this.

Most of his teachings are great, but some like this where scriptural accounts are missing or weak are suspect.

## JOSEPH SMITH, BOOK OF MORMON ORIGINS

Urim & Thummim, Not Seer Stone

Joseph Smith Upright Character

Progressive Attack on Church History





[Urim & Thummim, NOT a Seer Stone Used in Translating the Book of Mormon: Looking at Primary Sources Q&A with Kimberly Smith, JSF Contributor](#)

Some are shocked to learn that the seer stones in possession of Joseph Smith may not have been used in the translation of the Book of Mormon as is currently taught in the church. For the past 200 years the church teaching was that he used the Urim and Thummim, and that's what the D&C, Book of Mormon, etc. say that he used. But modern liberal scholars have been using apostate sources to start saying Joseph used the seer stone instead in the translation.

See the Seer Stone vs Urim & Thummim book by James and Hannah Stoddard for more on this subject (purchase it at [josephsmithfoundation.org](http://josephsmithfoundation.org)), which shows that there are no authoritative statements from those who remained strong in the church saying that a stone was used in translation. What the Lord & Joseph Smith said is that the Urim and Thummim were used, and that they were prepared for many years for that purpose. The book shows how some very strong minded progressive church historians pushed for a more human version of Joseph Smith, less inspired, and downplayed his role as prophet receiving divine revelation.

Question: Is there not an account of Emma Smith saying Joseph used the hat to help translate? Also one of the story where the false Stone was replaced for the true Stone and Joseph said all is dark as Egypt and he couldn't translate until the correct Stone was back?

Answer from Kimberly Watson Smith, shared with her permission:

The source that Progressive scholars use for Emma claiming he used a stone in the hat comes from an alleged interview conducted by Joseph Smith III, her son who was the founder of the RLDS church and was head of the lifelong crusade to deny plural marriage. The interview he alleges that happened between him and his mother wasn't released until months AFTER her death. And was published in the Saints Herald which was an RLDS publication in 1879.

In that same source, Emma also denies that Joseph practiced and taught plural marriage and she also states that “David Whitmer can be trusted and relied upon to tell the truth”.

So if you believe Emma’s statements in this interview than you have to also believe that David Whitmer who For the last 50 years went around publishing books and articles denying Priesthood Restoration, claiming Joseph Smith was a false and fallen Prophet, denying all the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants AND denying that Joseph Smith held any keys was being truthful.

The Saints Herald interview is an unreliable source and if it is to be relied upon and Emma was being truthful than you have to also believe Joseph Smith was a false and fallen Prophet and one who believes this to be true cannot rightly claim to have a testimony of the church or the restoration.

Another problem with the source is that a decade earlier, Emma was interviewed by another newspaper and her memory was so far gone that she said she couldn’t remember anything and would have to “read it in her books”.

Any honest person would ask themselves... is this source reliable considering Joseph Smith III’s animosity towards the Saints And the CHURCh?

Why did Emma suddenly regain a memory on her death bed that she didn’t have 10 years earlier? Why did she trust David Whitmer who never stopped claiming Joseph Smith was not a true prophet?

Joseph Smith III was only 11 years old when his Father died. He was surrounded by a lot of Apostates, men who were involved in the conspiracy and the mob that killed his father, who worked hard to influence him to fight against the Church. He was greatly deceived.

I have personally read original letters between him and Hyrum’s grown children trying to teach Joseph Smith III the truth and he refutes it And denies it.

I have read original letters between Joseph Smith III and William E McClellin who was an apostle turned bitter enemy who was involved in the Haun’s Mill Massacre, returned to the scene of the crime and was found laughing over the dead bodies a children and raped women. William E McClellin was the REAL Author of the stone in the hat narrative who convinced Joseph Smith III of the truth of it and also convinced David Whitmer to change his testimony on translation. Which

you can read how many time he changed his testimony in the Seer Stone vs Urim and THUMMIM book.

It is historical laziness and our reliance on the so called experts and these “modern scholars” that is responsible for the church accepting the same tired and worn out anti-Mormon claims that have been refuted since the commencement of the Church. And only resurfaced again during the Leonard J Arrington era when he trained futre scholars of the church to take these sources seriously so they could “change the history and change the doctrine”.

With the Josphe Smith papers and the open archives anyone can fact check sources for themselves. It isn't even very hard.

Question: was there anyone else who told the seerstone in a hat narrative besides Emma and David Whitmer?

Answer from Kimberly:

yes there were others but they all come from people who were NEVER involved in translation of the Book of Mormon and apostatized from the Church.

Also the earliest source for the stone and the hat narrative came from Mormonism Unveiled by Eber D Howe, who swore to wash his hands in the blood of Joseph Smith, and was the first anti- Mormon publication that contained affidavits from people who claimed to know Joseph Smith but fought bitterly against the church.

Doctor Philastrus Hurlbut was hired by an anti-Mormon committee to collect the affidavits but they had to publish them under Howe's name in order to make them appear Credible because Hurlbut was involved in several affairs and robbed and murdered a man.

This is the source for the Stone in the hat story. It makes you so made when you read the history and see how the narrative started to discredit Joseph Smith by known murderers is now touted as the “faithful narrative” today.

Question: Did Joseph have a seer stone?

Answer from Kimberly:

I don't deny that Joseph Smith had a Seer Stone or perhaps more than one.

What we do know is that a Seer Stone was NEVER used in translation. We have the testimony of Jesus Christ in scripture ( Doctrine and Covenants section 17), the multiple testimonies of Joseph Smith who repeatedly said he translated the plates using the Urim and THUMMIM. And never said anything about a Seer Stone used for translation. And also His principle scribe, Oliver Cowdery also repeatedly testified of the Urim and Thummim as well. There is not a single statement coming from Joseph Smith or Oliver Cowdery about the stone in the hat.

What we do know is that he did have a Seer Stone. In the history of Joseph Smith by his mother, Lucy Mack tells the story of Joseph Smith Sr overhearing Willard Chase and other plotting to take the plates from Joseph. And Emma telling Joseph of the plot. Joseph reaches into his pocket and pulls out a stone, looks inside it ( without a hat) and reassures Emma that the plates are safe.

The Stone described by Lucy was not brown but was white and clear like a diamond.

We know through scripture that all the SEERS held a stone but the Stone was called a Urim and THUMMIM which means lights and perfections or in other words receiving perfect truth aka revelation. Seer Stone is not a term found anywhere in scripture. The Lord described a white stone that we receive in the Celestial Kingdom in Doctrine and Covenants and in the Book of Revelation.

There are no public teachings from Joseph Smith or Brigham Young on the spiritual operation of these "Seer Stones" so we can not speculate. Satan has a counterfeit and that is where our understanding of Seer Stones comes from but to apply that understanding to a Heavenly device when it's operation has not been revealed is wrong and irresponsible and will open people to the adversary who is more than happy to reveal to you his counterfeit.

Question: Was there not a lady used a "peep stone" to try to find the plates?

Answer from Kimberly:

Yes her name was Sally Chase. It was a peep Stone and it was definitely from the Occult.

Bruce R McConkie wrote:

[Bruce R. McConkie, p 565+] PEEP STONES.

See Devil, Revelation, Urim and Thummim.

“In imitation of the true order of heaven whereby seers receive revelations from God through a Urim and Thummim, the devil gives his own revelations to some of his followers through peep stones, or crystal balls. An instance of this copying of the true order occurred in the early days of this dispensation. Hiram Page had such a stone and was professing to have revelations for the up-building of Zion and the governing of the Church”

We learn in Doctrine and Covenants section 28 that Hiram Page found a stone and was receiving revelations from his stone. Many members were deceived by it.

Joseph Smith had Oliver Cowdery take Hiram Paige aside and tell him the revelations were of the devil. The Stone And the Revelations were destroyed.

What it comes down to is the scriptural fact that only those whom God calls as Seers have the authority from God to use stones or other devices for Revelation. I personally believe that God took that authority from us due to disobedience to the Revelations of Joseph Smith and will not be restored again until He returns to redeem Zion.

In other words, I don't trust anyone alive today who claims to have a Seer Stone and can use it.

In addition to Aaron and the Priests of Israel including Abraham in the Bible who we have record of having “Seer Stones” aka a URIM and THUMMIM, Book of Mormon Prophets also had them see

Omni 1:20-21

Mosiah 8: 13-19; 21:26-28; 28: 11-20; Ether 4: 1-7

Question: What of the story of the stone being replaced?

Answer from Kimberly:

the story of the stone being replaced was allegedly from Martin Harris.

The problem with that source also is that is COMPLETE HEARSAY.

It comes from a reporter who claims to have interviewed Martin Harris who he alleges told him the story. But there are no first hand accounts of Martin Harris claiming he ever said that or even telling that same story.

Conclusion from Kimberly:

I also want to quickly point out that in the History of Joseph Smith he emphasized that there were so many falsehoods produced and written about Himself, his family, and the church that it could fill VOLUMES. And he could not even write a hundredth part of the lies that were being spread.

We shouldn't be surprised that these sources exist but we should be very distrustful and skeptical of so-called "professionals" who use these sources and give them the same kind of validity as true and faithful sources.

In addition to *Mormonism Unveiled* being a favorite source of our modern scholars they also like to quote from Tiffany's journal which was a newspaper/periodical from Joseph Smith's time that was equivocal to the *National Enquirer* of today.

That's why we must do our own factchecking and not rely upon "experts".



Summary of Hurlbut: The Corrupt Source of the Sources on “Magical  
Treasure Stone” Joseph Smith

Hurlbut was a robber murderer adulterer and was excommunicated from at least 3 churches. He then swore to wash his hands in Joseph Smith's blood. He was also locked out of another Christian church for same reasons. He was jailed for the threats etc. He fled the country. Not a credible guy. Yet the modern church historians are giving credence to the affidavits he gathered against Joseph! They are what compose Mormonism Unveiled by ED Howe who hated Joseph and left Christianity for spiritualism/satanism. Hurlbut sold his collections to Howe since no one would believe it coming from him, he being so incredible.

Incredible! This is where the stories of him being a treasure seeker, looking for treasure in a hat, lying to people about locations of buried treasure, being a drunkard, being lazy, supposedly saying there really are no gold plates, randomly attacking people, drawing magic circles and practicing necromancy, and all manner of ridiculous stories. Some people who he interviewed had regular and good things to say about Joseph he ignored those people and instead went to all the crazies to gather their stories.

The accounts to this day about Joseph finding a seer Stone in someone's field is from one of these affidavits and is total bogus.

And Joseph did not use a rock and a hat to translate the holy Book of Mormon! That was never the account until the 60s when these super liberal historians started taking evil men's accounts seriously.

[Identifying a Modern Anti-Christ: Richard Bushman, author of “Rough Stone Rolling” by Kimberly Smith, JSF Contributor](#)

The following is by Kimberly Smith, and is shared here with her permission.

During General Conference October 1970, President Benson identified and named five specific antichrists in our own day. Among the 5 Anti-Christ's named, Sigmund Freud was the TOP of the List.

We must keep this in mind. A prophet of God identified a modern Anti-Christ in our day!

An antichrist is an opponent of Christ; he is one who is in opposition to the true gospel, the true Church, and the true plan of salvation. President Benson taught that the purpose of the Book of Mormon is to bring men to Christ by “testifying of Christ and revealing His enemies.

In 2005, Historian and LDS Author Richard Bushman wrote an explosive Biography, *Rough Stone Rolling*, on the Prophet Joseph Smith completely changing his nature and character from a Prophet of God, so Holy and Pure that both the Father and Son would come to while yet in his youth, into a Lazy, adulterous, Treasure Digger, involved in magic and the occult claiming these activities served as a "preparatory gospel". Bushman even went as far as to INSIST that the Church must CHANGE ITS DOMINATIVE NARRATIVE, change the history that was upheld for over 190 years by every President of the Church!

Was Richard Bushman writing a "Faithful History" based on credible, authenticated sources? Must we accept this "New Joseph Smith" and re-write our history to reflect Bushman's NEW interpretations.??

Richard Bushman in a series of lectures regarding the writing of his magnum opus, *Rough Stone Rolling*, admitted the following:

“I don’t think many professionals set as their goal to determine if Joseph Smith was a true prophet. Most begin with a desire to understand the person they are writing about and portray him as accurately as they can. In my case, I wanted to understand how Joseph Smith understood himself... I try to get inside my subject’s mind. That is the kind of history I like to read and choose to write”.

What does it say about Bushman that he used the psychology of a known "ANTICHRIST" instead of facts and data to interpret Joseph Smith? And how different are his delusions about the mind of one of the greatest men

to ever walk the face of the earth compared to what God says about him?

In Section 121 of the Doctrine of Covenants Jesus Christ said to the Joseph Smith:

"God shall give unto you knowledge by his bHoly Spirit, yea, by the unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost, that has not been revealed since the world was until now"

In other words, God is saying that Adam, Enoch, Abraham, and etc had KNOWLEDGE but the Prophet Joseph Smith had MORE knowledge than them!!!

Ricard Bushman did not write a faithful Biography of the Prophet Joseph Smith. He saw Joseph Smith as a sick patient who needed to be diagnosed. Instead of writing a truthful history, he wrote a "Psychohistory" using Freudian psychology to misuse evidence and to serve up "questionable interpretations". This is NOT an honest Scholarship.

"In an effort to understand eighteenth-century religious and political thought, Bushman was a Young scholar who took seminars from psychosocial theorist Erik Erikson, a student of Freud's. Psychological theory had entered the writing of historians trained in the generation after World War II And Bushman found in what later became known as "psychohistory" a way to extend his empathetic approach" ( Bushman, Believing History, Introduction xiii).

"All of these Eriksonian notions were in the back of my mind when I worked in the Prophet Joseph Smith over the past eight years. I really didn't set out to do a deep psychological portrait of the Prophet. I knew I lacked Erickson's finesse, but after completing the biography last year, I realized that Erickson's influence could be seen in its pages". Richard Bushman

Bushman's ego and confidence in "psychology" were greater than his knowledge and confidence in God and his chosen Latter-day Servant even the Prophet Joseph Smith. For "there is not so great a man as Joseph standing on this generation... His mind, like Enoch's, expands as eternity, and ONLY GOD can comprehend his soul".

I highly recommend this Two-Part Vidcast from the Joseph Smith Foundation in order to get the REAL HISTORY, the TRUE FACTS, and the REAL DATA about Bushman's claims.

Part One: <https://fb.watch/5jVwucn1dx/>

Part

Two: <https://www.facebook.com/JosephSmithFoundation/videos/1094141174426752>



## Joseph Smith the Scripture Student from Youth & Adult Scholar

Joseph Smith starts telling his story of the time when he was around 6 or 7 years old. Why? It had so much to do with his spiritual development. Why? When he was laid up 3 years with his leg injury he read. He read a lot. What did he read? The bible. He said he could go learn from going to the woods and reading the bible for 2 hours than from a year of church. He also hung out in the local book store reading, so much that they had to chase him out.

He was well familiar with all the denominations and leaders thereof. He spent his time in the Christian community, and knew the doctrines of each group.

By the way, the statement that he couldn't dictate a coherent sentence by Emma isn't a legitimate statement, and came from her last words, at which time she denied many obvious truths, such as Joseph's plural marriages.

Later in life Joseph became an even greater scholar, becoming well versed in ancient tongues. He lamented that he couldn't further master all languages due to the time constraints of his administrative duties.

## Translation VS Revelation: Book of Mormon Origin Resolves Issues

The Book of Mormon was TRANSLATED into English by Joseph Smith. Progressives claim it was a revelation on a stone. Not so. So the questions automatically resolve with the translation perspective.

Yes, Joseph could add words to the Book of Mormon in later years, clarifying things of the translation.

Yes, Joseph could use language found in the bible, he was well versed in the bible, and used that language to describe the ideas presented on the plates.

Yes, the plates existed, he used the plates to translate. Progressives say the plates weren't even used in the process and it was just a stone in a hat, they therefore say 'was the book even represented in what appeared on the stones?'

If a random stone which glowed in a hat was used to translate, why would the plates be so painstakingly preserved across the ages? Why would the Urim and Thummim (translators) be passed down from generation to generation?

Sadly, the church is bowing to the interpretations of these progressive bias historians who are completely changing church history as we know it. Satan is the driving force behind these things.

Joseph loved to study and learn ancient languages. He was a translator in every sense. He studied characters, learned the language for several months before the translation began. It is claimed that all was said about the translation process is that it was "by the gift and power of God." But look at the original sources, way more than that is revealed. Joseph specifically said he translated the book from hieroglyphics.

## On Porter Rockwell

Brigham Young said Porter Rockwell is the most honest man he ever knew

Sources say Porter killed 25 people but he was never accused of murder they were all in self-defense or legal executions of law. He would always put the dead body in the back of his wagon and bring it into the judge and would be ruled correct.

some men were coming to kill him they said are you Porter he said no but these are his dogs and so the men went to kill the dogs and while they did that he killed them

One man came to shoot Florida and Porter said you can't kill me the cops still on your gun and while the guy looked at his gun Porter shot him so quickly that he didn't even have time to take the gun out of his coat pocket so he shot through his coat and killed the guy in the heart

Porter spared a guy in a duel because of who the guy's parents were

When Porter saw someone in the Smith family who had lost their hair due to sickness he cut off his hair and made them a wig and gave it to them he loved the Smith family

On one occasion a man was firing directly at Porter and another man saw the flame go in through the front of him and out the back of him and yet he stood unscathed in fulfillment of the covenant promise

Porter could not read or write but was a very good businessman and became very rich from selling tools to prospectors and running motels and bars

Joseph called Porter 'Ol Port

Joseph and Porter grew up together

Porter was a scout that led pioneers and blazed trails to Utah and California

when he decided he needed to start carrying a gun with him to protect his second amendment rights of life and property he went out into the woods he didn't know how to use it he went out into the woods and practiced shooting for a long time until he became one of the best

He donated all of his wealth to the church  
It was that money that financed The Exodus of the Saints out of Missouri.

There was an assassination attempt on Governor boggs they accused Joseph Smith Joseph Smith wasn't around so they accused his bodyguard Porter they brought Porter to court and they said but Evans do you have that it wasn't you and Porter said well he is still alive the judge agreed that yes Porter is the best shot around he wouldn't still be alive if it was Porter and Joseph heard about this of them accusing Porter Joseph said the same thing it wasn't Porter because he's still alive.

Porter was being taken to jail as an attempt to lure Joseph Smith in as they were so close friends and the sheriff driving the carriage was drunk and crashed at several times so Porter finally took over and drove himself to jail.

In jail Porter was locked for 6 weeks with his right rest to left ankle and left wrist to right ankle. eventually someone gets locked up with him who's snuck in a file he becomes free and escapes. After escaping he jumped the fence and then he saw that his friend fell down and needed his help so he went to help his friend and while he was doing that he ran into the wife of the jailer and he said oh excuse me I'm sorry I would help make sure you're not injured but I'm escaping jail so I have to go and then he tried to run but got caught and went put back in jail but while he was in there he overheard men talking about an assassination attempt on Joseph. He prayed for a way to get that message to Nauvoo he prayed very hard he was a man of great faith and the next day Porter's mother came to visit him and she was able to take the message. The conditions in the jail were very bad Joseph Smith went to the temple lot stood on top of a sunstone that was being carved waved his hat around and told

everyone to make donations to help get Porter out of jail. Then he took and saw there was some wrestling and stick pulling going on and so he found the biggest strongest man around and he told everyone I'm going to stick pull this man and who will bet that I can do it I bet all the money in this hat that I can do it and so every buddy puts more money in the hat on that bet and then Joseph won him in the stick pull threw him over his shoulder and then as if that wasn't enough he went and picked up the man by his shirt collar and his belt and hefted him into a stream nearby then he went over and hugged the man and said that was good clean fun. He was able to raise \$200 to get Porter free. When free Porter went to Joseph's house, hadn't bathed or shaved or cut hair in 8 months. Porter acted drunk, Joseph told some men to "get that drunk missourian out of here" the men could not, so Joseph went to escort him by his collar out of the house, their eyes caught and Porter began to laugh. Joseph brought a chair to the middle of the room and told everyone to listen to Porter's story of the past 8 months. Terrible rotten food, etc. It was then that Joseph promised Porter that if he was true to his COVENANTS, the church and his God, no bullet or blade would kill him. In token of accepting that covenant promise of that day, Porter vowed to never cut his hair. So his power wasn't directly from his hair.

One time Emma was out for a few days and while she was gone Joseph had some Carpenters come and build a bar in his house and Porter was there working that bar and when Emma came home she saw it and said either that goes or I go so Joseph had the bar disabled and rebuilt across the street and Porter worked there.

When Joseph fled he wasn't doing so out of cowardice he was going with Porter to get some horses so he could go to Washington DC to voice his grievances against Governor Ford on the mobs.

Porter was going to go to Carthage with Joseph, Joseph said they will kill me Porter said I will come Joseph said you must not Porter said I must Joseph said I command you to not come so Porter didn't come. Porter got word that there was trouble at Carthage so he sped out on his horse to Carthage this was the only time he disobeyed the prophet but they had already been killed.

Porter was a deputy so we had to legal obligation to protect people there was a mob coming to kill Brigham to Porter shot the leader of the mob and killed him as was his legal right and obligation. The man who killed was the main person who let the mob to Carthage to kill Joseph Smith he was probably the man who killed Joseph Smith. Frank Warrel. Leader of the mob being down the mobs quieted down and took a while to reassemble this gave the time the Saints needed to escape the state. Brigham Young told Porter to turn himself into Illinois as he was wanted for the supposed murder of Frank Porter says I'll do whatever you say You're The profit so he goes into town and brought daylight he's walking around nobody really does anything so he thinks well maybe I need to commit a crime so they'll arrest me so he finds one of his old enemies and he says I'm Porter and I'm going to kill you the man runs away Porter shoots shots well over his head just to draw attention finally the sheriff comes and knocks on Porter's door to arrest him Porter pretends to put up a stink and says no you've got to come in here and get me and Porter finally comes out with his hands raised and a smile on his face and is arrested. this serves to draw the attention of the mobs away from killing the Saints and toward the trial of Porter. Later it was found that Porter was in self-defense in the case of Frank and so Porter was let go and joined the Saints again.

Emma was 5 months pregnant when Joseph died

He died of a heart attack with his boots on. Prophecy of Joseph was fulfilled that he would not die by bullet or blade as he remained faithful to his covenants his church and his God.

## [The Prophet Joseph: More Than We Know by the Joseph Smith Foundation – Documentary Highlights](#)



As they are extensive, these highlights are shared with permission of the author.

**Key Points:** The root of Jesse is Joseph Smith, he is the servant of Christ, the David of the latter days who will yet have political and ecclesiastical authority over all the earth, who will return in the flesh to lay out inheritances in Missouri the New Jerusalem, who will unite old and new Jerusalem, who will call down the plagues of the last days, a Millennial leader under Christ like Joseph in Egypt was under Pharaoh in his day, etc. As Jesus is the revealer of the Father, so is Joseph Smith the revealer of Jesus. As Jesus visited his people after his resurrection, so will Joseph Smith after his. Joseph will lead the Great Council of God in Zion and Jerusalem. Like Christ, Joseph Smith was largely rejected in his mortal ministry, but will be accepted in his second coming. People of this dispensation need the consent of Joseph Smith to enter the celestial kingdom where God and Christ are. Joseph Smith is the angel of the last days spoken of in Revelation 14, the servant in Jacob 5, the servant in D&C 101, the latter-day Elias preparing the way of the Lord.

For another presentation by the Joseph Smith Foundation related to the signs of the times, see “The Mystery of the 2 Prophets” discussing how Joseph and Hyrum Smith could fit the Rev. 11 two prophets.

“Would to God, brethren, I could tell you who I am! Would to God I could tell you what I know! But you would call it blasphemy...”  
(Joseph Smith)

-Joseph is a messenger, a David, a witness, a servant, etc. Some LDS scholars think Joseph Smith is proud and arrogant, but we will see that he simply stood in his rightful place.

-Who is the latter-day servant of Isa. 42? Is his name David? Who is this “one mighty and strong”?

The latter-day witness isn’t just A witness, he is THE witness. The leader of the world. He has all political authority under the Savior, and all direction of the church under the Savior. The Moses of the latter-day exodus. It is even likely that ancient Israel sacrifices prefigure this man.

Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, and the ancient authors of holy writ knew who the latter-day servant is.

If we don’t know who the servant is, we lose much perspective of the latter days.

see discourse “Joseph Smith: A Revealer of Christ” where Bruce McConkie shows that just as Jesus Christ is the revealer of Heavenly Father, so is Joseph Smith the revealer of Jesus Christ.

Joseph clarified Gabriel as Noah, and Michael as Adam. Who is Joseph Smith?

3 Nephi 21:9 speaks of a marvelous work and a wonder that people won’t believe although a man declare it to them.

Isaiah 52 speaks of Christ being marred, similarly 3 Ne. 21:10 speaks of the servant of the latter days being marred.

LDS scholars have said that the latter-day servant would seal the 144,000, would be a king in Israel, would call down plagues upon the wicked in the last days, would preach to the Jews after they had rebuilt Jerusalem, etc. Joseph Smith can fit all of these roles, especially in light of the repeated doctrine that Joseph Smith will return. As the scripture says, he was marred, and will be healed. Like the Savior, his first coming was largely rejected, but his second coming will be wonderful.



“Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord and my God shall be my strength” this ancient prophecy can apply to Joseph Smith and Jesus Christ. Mortality is not the end, like how patriarchal blessings need not all be fulfilled within the time frame of mortality.

Heber C Kimball taught in 1861: You will see the say when Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, and Brigham Young etc. will be there in the flesh laying out the inheritances in Missouri. The quote continues “...the day will be when I will see those men [the aforementioned latter-day brethren] in the general assembly of the Church of the First Born, in the great council of God in Jerusalem too....I heard Joseph say twice that Brother Brigham and I should be in that council in Jerusalem, when there should be a uniting of the two divisions of God’s government.”

D&C 85:7 speaks of the one mighty and strong with a scepter and arranging by lot the inheritances of the saints

D&C 77 speaks of 2 prophets raised up to the Jewish nation at the time of the restoration after the Jews are gathered and have built Jerusalem in the land of their fathers. The time of the restoration is the time of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. More on that in the Joseph Smith Foundation film “The Mystery of the Two Prophets”

Isa. 11:10 speaks of a “root of Jesse” coming from the stem of Jesse (Jesus Christ); D&C 113:5 speaks of the “root of Jesse” and gives this interpretation in verse 6: “[the root of Jesse] is a descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days.” The root of Jesse could well be Joseph Smith, Bruce R McConkie teaches that he is this servant and is this servant.

Ezek. 34:24 speaks of Jehovah’s servant David as a prince

Days before his martyrdom, Joseph Smith said to his Nauvoo legion “I promise you when I come again I shall lead you forth so that where I am you shall be also.” He also said just before his martyrdom, “Don’t be sad, don’t be cast down, I will come back again...as soon as I can” (autobiography of Wandle Mace)

“Joseph, Hyrum, Father Smith, and many others will be there [during the Millennium] to dictate and preside. Joseph will stand at the head of this dispensation and hold the keys of it, for they are not taken from him; they never were in time; they never will be in eternity. I shall be there if I live or if I die.” (President Brigham Young, April 1853, when JS had been dead nearly 9 years)

Joseph Smith will reign during the Millennium under Christ in a similar way that Joseph of old ruled in Egypt under Pharaoh. Joseph in Egypt was a type of Joseph Smith, foreshadowing the even greater role that Joseph Smith would play.

“I said to Brother Joseph, the spring before he was killed, “you are laying out work for 20 years.” He replied, “you have as yet scarcely begun to work; but I will set you enough to last you during your lives, for I am going to rest.” All I can do or ask now is to do the work, so that it will be right and acceptable to him when he comes here again.”  
(President Brigham Young, 1857)

Brigham understood that he held a stewardship to carry out what Joseph told him to do. The marching orders of latter day prophets are dictated by Joseph Smith.

“Joseph Smith Junior will again be on this earth dictating plans...And he will never cease his operations, under the directions of the Son of God, until the last ones of the children of men are saved that can be, from Adam till now. There is an almighty work to perform in the spirit world. Joseph has not yet got through there. When he finishes his mission in the spirit world, he will be resurrected, but he has not yet done there...When his spirit again quickens his body, he will ascend to heaven, present his resurrected body to the Father and the Son, receive his commission as a resurrected being, and visit his brethren on this earth as did Jesus after his resurrection.” (President Brigham Young, 1857)

Brigham taught that Joseph Smith has some stewardship for everyone that has lived on this earth, and that he has Millennial keys.

President Kimball’s prophecy, “An army of Elders”: there will be great prosperity in the west followed by financial bondage, “then persecution comes next and all true latter-day saints will be tested to the limit. Many will apostatize and others will be still not knowing what to do. Darkness will cover the earth and gross darkness the minds of the people. The judgements of god will be poured out on the wicked to the extent that our elders will be called home, or in other words, the gospel will be taken from the Gentiles and later on carried to the Jews. The western boundary of the state of Missouri will be swept so clean of its inhabitants that, as Brigham Young tells us, when you return to that place there will not be left so much as a yellow dog to wag his tail. Before that day comes however, the saints will be put to a test that will try the integrity of the best of them. The pressure will become so great that the more righteous of them will cry to the Lord day and night until

deliverance comes. Then the prophet Joseph and others will make their appearance and those who have remained faithful will be selected to return to Jackson County Missouri and take part in the building of that beautiful city, the New Jerusalem.”

After Joseph’s martyrdom, Parley Pratt received a revelation that “my servant Joseph still holds the keys of my kingdom in this dispensation, and he shall stand in due time on the earth in the flesh and fulfil that to which he is appointed.”

“Those who are your friends are my friends, and I promise you when I come again, I will lead you forth, so that where I am you shall be with me.” (Joseph Smith)

The SLC temple east doors niches held statues of Joseph and Hyrum until 1911.

Joseph likely also fits the description of angels and prophets in the book of Revelation. Revelation 14 speaks of an angel.

The original architectural designs for the angel Moroni atop the temples featured a temple with the book of Mormon in one hand, and a trumpet in the other, on a weather vane, featuring a stylized tongue of fire, a compass, and a square.

Brigham saw years before the construction of the SLC temple every time he went to the place it was to be constructed. He never had to ask God how to build it because it was shown him plainly. Similarly, the Nauvoo temple was shown to Joseph Smith.

According to the Perrigrine Sessions journal, “on this day they raised the figure which is the representation of an Angel in his Priestly robe with the book of Mormon in one hand and a trumpet in the other which is over laid with gold leaf”

Many say this angel on our temples is a representation of Rev. 14:6-7 the angel flying through the midst of heaven with the gospel to preach to every nation, telling that the hour of the judgement of God is come. Its clear this angel has a large role in the latter days. Some have speculated that this angel is Moroni, who indeed helped Joseph Smith. But it could be Joseph Smith himself. Joseph Smith said he would give “a literal rendering” of Matthew 24. Joseph said, “The Savior said when these tribulations should take place, it should be committed to a man who should be a witness over the whole world...the keys of knowledge, power, and revelations should be revealed to a witness who should hold the testimony to the world” (Joseph Smith, cited May 12, 1844, Thomas

Bullock report). This witness and the tribulations are clearly referencing the last days.

“It has always been my providence to dig up new things, hidden things for my hearers. Just at the time when some men think I have no right to the keys of the priesthood, just at that time, I have the greatest right...All the testimony is that the Lord in the last days would commit the keys of the priesthood to a witness over all people. Has the Gospel of the kingdom commenced in the last days? And will God take it from the man until He takes him Himself?” (Joseph Smith, 1844). We realize that aside from Jesus Christ, Joseph Smith was prophesied of more than anyone in scripture. Here we see that Joseph identifies himself as the witness of the last days.



“The building up of Zion is a cause that has interested the people of God in every age. It is a theme upon which prophet’s priests and kings have dwelt with particular delight. They have looked forward with joyful anticipation to the day in which we live, and fired with heavenly and joyful anticipations, they have written and sung and prophesied of this our day. But they died without the sight. We are the favored people that God has made choice of to bring about the latter-day glory. It is left for us to see, participate in, and help to roll forward the latter-day glory.” (Joseph Smith)

Since the mission of the witness is to build Zion, how could it be someone other than Joseph Smith?

“Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the Lord, has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it.” (John Taylor)

“no man or woman in this dispensation will ever enter into the celestial kingdom of God without the consent of Joseph Smith...every man and woman must have the certificate of Joseph Smith, Junior, as a passport to their entrance into the mansion where God and Christ are... [Joseph Smith] reigns there as supreme a being in his sphere, capacity, and calling, as God does in heaven. Many will exclaim- “Oh, that is very

disagreeable! It is preposterous! We cannot bear the thought!” But it is true.” (Brigham Young, 1859)

The prophet Joseph Smith reigns under Jesus Christ in the celestial kingdom

“Jesus Christ excepted, no better man ever lived or does live upon this earth.” (Brigham Young referring to Joseph Smith)

“Has the gospel of the kingdom commenced in the last days and will God take it from the man until he takes him himself? I have read it precisely as the words flowed from the lips of Jesus Christ. John the revelator saw an angel flying through the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth. The scripture is ready to be fulfilled when great wars famines pestilence great distress judgements and so forth are ready to be poured out on the inhabitants of the

earth. John saw the angel having the holy Priesthood, who should preach the everlasting gospel to the nations. God had an angel- a special



messenger- ordained and prepared for that purpose in the last days. Woe, woe be to that man or set of men who lift up their hands against God and His witness in these days: for they shall deceive almost the very chosen ones.” (Joseph Smith, May 12, 1844, Thomas Bullock report) Here Joseph Smith connects the angel of Rev. 14 with the special messenger/servant of the last days, and essentially acknowledges that he is the man.

Joseph Smith shows us that the angel is the special witness, who is the messenger, who is himself.

the documents from this presentation are available at [josephsmithfoundation.org/research](http://josephsmithfoundation.org/research)

The above citations by Joseph Smith show himself to be the latter-day witness:

- a. he speaks of the latter-day witness,
- b. he makes direct reference to himself,

- c. again he references the witness,
- d. understanding the context of the passage we see that he again directly speaks of himself,
- e. he invokes Christ as a witness of this claim,
- f. he then introduces the Rev 14 angel as the revealer of the Gospel to all the earth,
- g. he places the angel in a latter-day context
- h. he speaks of this angel's right to the priesthood and keys in the latter days
- i. he identifies the angel as the messenger who holds the keys in the latter days
- j. he finally warns against all those who attempt to slander or vilify himself as the witness in the latter days

Malachi's messenger 'preparing the way' may allude to Joseph Smith, a latter-day prophet crying in the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord.

"Malachi as Isaiah speaks of the Lord sending his servant to prepare the way before him and while that does have reference to the coming of John the Baptist, it is one of those scriptures that has double fulfillment, it has reference also to the coming of the prophet Joseph Smith because that messenger which was to come and prepare the way before him was to come in this day, the latter days." (President Joseph Fielding Smith)

The Lord coming suddenly to his temple was fulfilled in the Kirtland temple, but will have dual fulfillment.

"Why do not my enemies strike a blow at the doctrine? They cannot do it: it is truth, and I defy all men to upset it. I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Repent ye of your sins and prepare the way for the coming of the Son of Man"...for the kingdom of God has come unto you, and henceforth the ax is laid unto the root of the tree; and every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, God Almighty (and not Joe Smith) shall hew it down and cast it into the fire." (Joseph Smith) Here Joseph directly quotes John the Baptist, making himself a latter-day John.

Malachi 3:2 speaks of Christ as a refining fire; Isaiah 10:17-18 speaks of "the light of Israel for a fire and his Holy One for a flame"; Isa. 31:9 speaks of the Lord's fire being in Zion

"The Lord in the former dispensation sent a messenger to prepare the way before him, and in this dispensation it was just as

necessary that a messenger be sent to prepare the way for the coming of the Lord and the establishment of the reign of peace. If Joseph Smith was not that man, then we must look for another.” If we must look for another, the Book of Mormon, LDS ordinances, and Joseph Smith himself are a fraud. Joseph declared himself to be this man. We know he fulfilled his mission.

“The Lord declared, through one of his prophets, that before his second coming a messenger should be sent to prepare the way and make it straight. You may apply this to John if you will, [speaking of John the Baptist] and it is true. John, the messenger who came to prepare the way before the Lord in the former dispensation, also came in this dispensation, as a messenger to Joseph Smith; so it applies, if you wish to apply it so, to John who came as a messenger to prepare the way before the Lord. But I go farther and maintain that Joseph Smith was the messenger whom the Lord sent to prepare the way before him. He came, and under direction of holy messengers laid the foundation for the kingdom of God and of this marvelous work and a wonder that the world might be prepared for the coming of the Lord.” (President Joseph Fielding Smith)

We also consider Joseph Smit has fulfilling the role of the Elias to restore all things, the 2 prophets in Rev. 11, the servant in D&C 101, the 1 sons in Isaiah, the servant in Jacob 5, the Davidic prince, etc. -“The Restoration of the gospel is true. Someday we’ll know of the greatness of the Prophet Joseph Smith.” (Elder David B. Haight, 1996) [Pictures featured in this chapter were featured in the documentary.]

Hidden Bloodlines: The Grail & The Lost Tribes  
of the North by the Joseph Smith Foundation –  
Documentary Highlights



As these highlights are extensive, they are shared with permission of the author.

The presentation was a non-dogmatic invitation to ponder powerful scriptural symbols & statements from the prophets which suggest & testify of deep truths about who the saints are. Answers which we have all been waiting for are found in this hidden documentary. Jesus Christ obeyed all of God's laws, including those pertaining to marriage and childbearing.

-Joseph Fielding Smith said Jesus had marriage and children, but not to preach it, as we don't cast pearls before swine. He said read your Book of Mormon, Mosiah 15 says the prophets are his seed. Literally. Many prophets and saints have the blood of Christ, descending from the posterity of Christ.

-Joseph Smith was from a hidden protected bloodline D&C 86:8-9 'according to the flesh' it says. The prophet and others of the early brethren were of a certain lineage.

- Once we know who we are and the royal lineage of which we come our choices in our lives will be more worthy of our inheritance (Russel M Nelson)
- The marriage where Jesus turned water into wine could have been Christ's marriage. Wilford Woodruff attended a conference where Joseph F. Smith taught that this occasion was Jesus' marriage to Mary & Martha.
- The marital status of Christ was suppressed in the great apostasy.
- Joseph F. Smith taught that the New Testament shows Mary & Martha had a much closer relationship to Jesus than disciples. He taught that Jesus came from polygamous ancestry, and he fulfilled every law, so he would have married.
- Martha asked Jesus to have Mary to help with the housework, the Lord's reply indicated the marital relationship. He wouldn't have been in his place; The stewardship of a family is never encroached upon even by the President of the Church
- Joseph Smith said If a man gets the fullness of the Priesthood of God he must get it the same way Jesus got it, via keeping all of the commandments.
- Orson Hyde said the relations of Christ and Mary & Martha would have been improper if they weren't married, him being in their home etc.
- Family and marriage are paramount in any righteous society, this was certainly true in the ancient Jewish times, it was considered essential. Sirach 36:24-26 speaks of an unmarried man being an untrusted wanderer. Trusted men are married. Genesis Rabbah 18, 2 says he who lives without marriage lives without joy and atonement.
- Paul explained a man must be married to be a good leader in the church 1 Timothy 3:2 NIV (overseer translated as bishop sometimes, generally indicating leadership in the church); also 1 Tim 3:4-5
- Paul says if a man can't even rule his house how can he rule in the church?
- The Talmud says whoever renounces marriage is to be looked upon as a murderer, who lessens those created in the image of God.
- Pharisees were always looking for ways to accuse Jesus, if he wasn't married, they would have used that against him, it would have immediately discredited him.
- In Jewish culture, children were productive and valuable. At age 13 they were transitioned to adulthood.
- Parents were to give knowledge of Torah, teach a trade, and find a wife for their sons.

- Mishnah 3rd century: an unmarried man must not be an elementary teacher.
- Torah studies started at age 5 or 6. Unmarried men weren't allowed to teach children. Christ taught children. If he weren't married, that would -a man was required to know the Torah, have a beard, and a wife to teach.
- John said I have no greater joy than to know my children walk in truth. So he had children.
- see book Dynasty of the Holy Grail, Mormonism's Secret Bloodline by Bern Swanson
- its shocking as women in Relief Society speak derogatory comments joking about how their children and husbands are burdens. These are precious blessings. Don't speak of teenagers as a curse.
- the generation gap didn't exist for 1000s of years before our modern society became so sophisticated. This modernist dread of children is not normal. Since when did the Lord's blessings become curses? LDS birth rates are low, not far behind the trend of society at large.
- Ludwig Kohler book "Hebrew Man" speaks of a single adult Jew as a bazar thing
- we have about 40 or 50 quotes in the church that Jesus was married. Elizabeth could have been a 4th wife.
- Jesus is the perfect son, father, husband, prince, king. The prototype in all.
- William Phelps taught that in Jewish culture lifelong celibacy was absurd. A core duty of a righteous father was to arrange the marriage of his sons.
- Joseph or Heavenly Father would have arranged the marriage of Jesus Christ.
- (Note: makes sense that Jesus appeared to Mary after the resurrection asap, and had to tell her not to touch him YET)
- Joseph Smith said the highest dignity of woman was marriage and ever-increasing childbearing
- Joseph Smith taught the parable of the talents referred to wives and children, the righteous being added unto despite their already having many. Jesus would have lived and fulfilled the law of celestial marriage.
- Passion for birthright, family, lineage, heritage, these things determine our mission.
- George Smith and others were called to rededicate Palestine, they had a particular blood type. Lorenzo Snow, Eliza R Snow, these were Jewish

from the tribe of Judah, dedicating that land for the return of THEIR people.

-The Lord's train Isaiah saw of the Lord on his throne, refers to his wives and children, said Brigham Young. They filled the temple and were more that couldn't fit in that temple. Young says this is the account told by Isaiah.

-Heber C Kimball believed he was a literal descendant of Christ, understanding the marriage and posterity of Christ. He had 43 wives and 66 children and was an apostle for 33 years as he tried to emulate Christ.

-We often talk about how the Lord died for us, but we also must think about how he lived, how he was our exemplar.

-George Q Cannon, Heber C Kimball, Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, etc. were literal descendants of Christ.

-a solemn assembly in a temple among the brethren discussed the family of Christ. D&C 86 says they are lawful heirs according to the flesh. The solemn assembly said that they are the sons of the prophets and the sons of God. Cannon said there are some in the audience who are descendants of the 12 Apostles and the Savior himself, that his seed is represented in this body of men. The same blood that helped build the primitive church helped build the latter-day church, a great, perhaps the greatest, multi-generational mission. President Snow said take these messages to the people. These messages tell us who we are, which leads us to act differently.

-The Lord has hidden this chosen seed among the poor and humble said George Q Cannon. Throughout history its rarely the strong popular learned people who do the work of God, but rather those who are humble obedient and overlooked by the world.

-George Q Cannon said that the Lord would reveal who those are that are the seed of Christ

-\*Joseph Smith said "would to God...I could tell you who I am!...you would call it blasphemy..." and Brigham Young said "...you have heard Joseph say that the people do not know him; he had his eyes on the relation to blood-relations."

-the most faithful in the restoration and cause of Zion are the literal descendants of the Lord.

-Heber C Kimball told George Q Cannon that he was a descendant of the Savior of the world. George Q Cannons mother (also related to John Taylor) from England was very faithful. She recognized the missionary's message immediately. She was pregnant with her 7th child. She had a

revelation that she wouldn't make it to Zion's gathering place in America, but she went anyway for her children's sake. She died at sea with her 7th unborn baby, but her posterity made it. Christ's posterity wasn't among the elite social circles of the day. The Lord had hidden his seed among the faithful.

-Orson Hyde said many call the marriage and children of Christ blasphemy, but encouraged them to search the scriptures and be pure. He said those with the Lord's blood are the Lord's chosen. He said secret and hidden things must come to light in the last days.

-if you are discouraged you need to study your roots and find a forgotten heritage of faith

### **The Holy Grail & the hidden family:**

-French legends say Mary Magdalene, one of the wives of Christ, traveled to France and Britain.

-other legends say Lazarus and Martha accompanied Mary to France.

-a legend says Mary is buried in Iona Scotland. This place is very sacred to early Celtic saints.

-John Martinus was believed to be the last son of Jesus by Mary and was born in Scotland.

-the holy grail legend is about the posterity of Christ being alive.

-ancient Hebrew times included a marriage involving the man and woman drinking a cup of wine together; sacrament is a symbol of the marriage of Christ and the church, etc.

-Joseph of Arimathea was given the grail.

-the posterity of Christ traveled to the lands of the North and helped establish the gospel there.

-1000 AD was a time of restoration, people were trying to find the bloodline of Christ, for the king out of David. The British Isles were ripe with the blood of Israel and Christ.

-Phillip goes to the kingdom of the Franks (France and Germany) and preaches.

-Joseph of Arimathea may be a pseudonym the bloodline used to protect it. This Joseph could have been a protector of the posterity of Christ.

-the grail resonated with so many. Why?

-King Arthur legends could be based on true characters who defended the posterity of Christ. The holy grail quest is often related to the posterity of Christ.

- The quest for the holy grail meant that the right man should search for the right woman to marry and keep alive the bloodline.
- the goal wasn't the grail itself, it was the quest for righteous marriage.
- Joseph Smith was the greatest prophet next to Jesus Christ. He is king of Israel with Christ (as presented by prophetic statements shown in other JSF documentaries).
- Jesus probably had enough children to ensure the survival of the bloodline. The children were kept a secret to protect those children. Then the secret was forgotten.
- Orson Hyde says Christ looked upon his own natural children at the time of his crucifixion. This is fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy. Hyde continues to say that with the death of those children's father, the children would have been forgotten. A child without a father isn't considered much.
- the posterity of Christ were in great danger. Their father died, claiming to be a king. The children weren't safe and fled. Herod tried to kill baby Jesus; his successors would try to kill the posterity of Jesus too.
- Orson Hyde says the seed of Christ has influence upon the chosen of God in the last days.

### **The Lion, Unicorn, and Grail: Healing the Breach:**

- in the dark ages, rightful heirs were hidden, usurpers ruled
- the lion, symbol of the tribe of Judah, and unicorn, symbol of Ephraim through Joseph, as well as the grail, are featured in early Christian art near the crucifixion.
- the 12 tribes each had their own symbols. Includes Jacobs adopted children of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh. The ox with its two horns of Ephraim and Manasseh is the symbol of Joseph. The Hebrew for ox is translated as unicorn also. Deut. 33:17 speaks of the horns of the ox will gather Israel in the last days.
- the official animal of Scotland is the unicorn. It is the symbol of Ephraim. No accident.
- Scotland royal banner has a lion, the symbol of Judah. Gen. 49:9, Judah's blessing says he is like a lion.
- Gen. 49:1 says these blessings were to tell of things to happen in the last days. This blessing is more relevant to us now than any other time in history, this is our story, the dispensation of Joseph Smith.
- some of the wives of Christ are said to have been of Ephraim.

-The chalice (grail) seen between the lion and unicorn could symbolize an heir coming in the last days to unite those 2 peoples. Joseph Smith fits the bill.

-Joseph Smith's mission is to unite Judah and call Israel from the lands of the North.

-Polish synagogues depict the lion and unicorn. Ezek. 37 speaks of a remnant of Ephraim and Judah in the lands of the north, and one uniting them in Israel.

-In Paris, many images of a lady with lion and unicorn next to her.

-Jer. 3:18 there will be a day when Judah and Ephraim will be in the land of the north.

-the lands of the north from Jerusalem include Europe. We've seen peoples going from Jerusalem to Europe.

-Joseph Smith came through both Judah and Ephraim.

-Joseph Smith taught that prophets and kings of old have long looked to our day with gladness. The work of Joseph Smith was considered a marvelous work and a wonder by all the ancient prophets who saw Joseph Smith in vision.

-Joseph Smith knew that he was a direct descendant of Jesus Christ.

-legend says the horn of the unicorn has magic healing powers; the work of Joseph Smith has healing powers to unite peoples.

-unicorn may have been a symbol for the holy grail. Mediaeval legends say all unicorns were hunted and killed, with only a few escaping and going into hiding. This could be an allegorical legend of Christ's descendants being hunted and killed, and only a few remaining.

-Christ's seed made its way to northern Europe.

### **Joseph Smith the Prince, Lawful Heir:**

-few realized little Joseph Smith, impoverished and uneducated child, had the blood of prophets and kings.

-Brigham Young said the Lord had his eyes on the family line of Joseph Smith all the way back to Abraham.

-April 11 1844 Joseph Smith was crowned king of Israel. See book of minutes of the council of 50.

-"restoring their judges and all as at first" is a very literal prophecy

-a political structure needed to be in place which would stay together despite the destructions of the last days. Joseph Smith was the true prince over the house of Israel of the last days.

-2 sons in Isaiah refer to Joseph and Hyrum Smith. Also Messiah Ben Joseph. Many other bible verses which are prophecies of Joseph Smith are presented.

-David B Haight, 1996 said someday we will know the greatness of the prophet Joseph Smith.

### **Jeremiah in Ireland: Protector of the bloodline**

-stone of destiny 'Jacobs pillow stone' brought to Ireland by Jeremiah. Used on European coronation ceremonies.

-Jeremiah established a school of the prophets in Ireland.

-a son of Zedekiah (Mulek) escaped Jerusalem and went to America as we read in the Book of Mormon.

-D&C 125:3

-Jer. 42:17 Jeremiah made it to Egypt but didn't stay since it was condemned. About 585 BC shortly after destruction of Jerusalem, Jeremiah arrived at Ulster, Ireland. The royal princess with him was a daughter of Jeremiah. They brought the harp of David with them. The harp symbol is everywhere in Ireland today, they acknowledge its connection to David. King Herremon was allowed to marry the princess as he renounced his old religion and established a school of the prophets.

-Joseph Smith made a school of the prophets in Kirtland, it was to prepare Elders to take the gospel message to the world. They studied the gospel, governments, etc.

-many parallels between Joseph Smith and Jeremiah shown in the presentation, including setting forth a new code of law, establishing a school of the prophets, etc.

-presentation speaks of sacred Irish coronation sites, Irish professor title alam, from Hebrew meaning eternal or sacred

### **Israel Returns:**

-Joseph Smith received a blessing to lead Israel on an exodus even as Moses. Moses later came and gave him the keys of the gathering of Israel from the lands of the north.

-restoration of Israel often split into 2 separate events: restoring the 10 tribes, and the literal gathering of Israel (see article of faith 12). Moses gave keys of both the gathering Israel and the gathering of the 10 tribes  
D&C 110

- a modern David would gather the people. This is Joseph Smith, whom has the blood of David.
- all end time prophecies hinge on the restoration and gathering of Israel.
- we are trying to gather people who don't know who they are; a nation who doesn't know they exist. The answer to this issue is what ancient prophets saw and called a marvelous work and a wonder.
- Columbus Washington and others all knew they were completing the exodus of Moses. They sought religious freedom. Millions came to America. Its the biggest migration of humans in the history of planet earth. Israel in part is already found and gathered from the lands of the north.
- Book of Mormon speaks of the New Jerusalem being a land of liberty many times. Obviously its referring to America.
- in 17th and 18th centuries, thousands of pilgrims etc. emigrated to America; this was no accident, it was the Lord gathering Israel after her long dispersion.
- the great migration study project says 20 thousand English people crossed the Atlantic came to New England colony. This doesn't include the other colonies. Scottish Presbyterians came, they had endured some of the worst persecution.
- Joseph Smith was the living rightful heir to call the 10 tribes from the North, they answered in droves. Kimball, Hyde, Young, etc. baptized some 8000 of them, and some 1000 of them migrated to America, gathering to Zion. These were Israel, when they heard the Lords voice, they ran to answer. Israel is all over Europe.
- Charles Dickens saw the LDS emigration to America, he said 'these are the pick and flower of England' (that are leaving)
- Some of these from England had the blood of the Savior.
- missionaries aren't to baptize everyone, but to gather out Israelites from among people.
- Brigham Young said we are of the royal blood of Israel.
- (Note: McConkie said 99% of all gathered to the church are the literal blood of Israel)
- 2 Ne. says the lost tribes will have the record of the Jews and Nephites.
- We already have a book of the history of the lost tribes, it's the D&C by Joseph Smith!
- the Lord has promised to reveal the genealogy of the lost tribes. there are records of the lost tribes of Israel. We will get this record when we as a people repent.

-British and Celtic faithful saints such as St. Brenden traveled to America before during and after Nephite times, and legend has it that they deposited records there for safe keeping. The hill Cumorah was filled with records, they could be the records of the lost tribes.  
-the record of the sacred bloodline will eventually be revealed

Nephites in Europe: Quest for the Nephite  
Remnant by The Joseph Smith Foundation –  
Documentary Highlights



(Here I am with my “I’m a Latter-day Nephite” shirt. Great conversation starter and reminder, get one at [josephsmithfoundation.org](http://josephsmithfoundation.org))

As these notes are extensive, they are shared with permission of the author.

You might be a Nephite. There may have been groups lead away before the destruction of that civilization. Ancient people of Europe baring a name similar to Nephi, and other scriptural symbols suggest that the Book of Mormon is deeply personal to many more than just American natives!

-Russel M Nelson said once we know our lineage, we will make better choices for our inheritance.

-People of Iceland had a prince Nefi. A Danish Icelandic of Czech Book of Mormon, it spells Nephi as Nefi.

-Japan, New Zealand, Europe, Nephites could have escaped to these places.

-the Niflim family of Germany Switzerland etc. descendants of Nefi, have a legendary golden sword.

-the historic text says Nefis fathers fame is all over the heavens, and that they have established many lines.

-Book of Mormon has a prophecy that it would go to the nation**S** and people**S** who were of Nephi's **SEED**.

-Brigham Young and others spoke of a

cave which Oliver Cowdry and Joseph Smith visited, there were piles of plates, many wagon loads piled up along the corners, walls, etc.

-Early church leaders insisted that the New York hill Cumorah was

-the Nefi legends said they had a mass of treasure and a golden sword. The plates and the sword of Laban.

-Brigham Young described the hill Cumorah to have precious stones and other precious items more than a 6 mule team could draw.

-the 1st time Joseph was at hill Cumorah the sword of Laban was sheathed and on the wall, the 2nd time it was unsheathed and upon the table with a message that it would never be sheathed again until the day of the Lord. The sword of the Icelandic Nefi had a name which meant wrath. Thus, the swords have same symbol of Gods wrath.

-The treasure of these Neflim has been searched for for a long time. JRR Tolkien adapts it into his writings, and the German opera of the Ride of the Valkyries is about fighting over that treasure.



- Nephites may have returned to America their promised land with the pilgrims, early LDS migrations from Europe, etc.
- Rod Meldrum whose physical evidence of Book of Mormon in the heartland of America.
- over half of non-Utah Mormons and 31% of Utah Mormons have questioned that the Book of Mormon is a historical book.
- Cana Nefates meaning people of Nephi crushed the Romans, the Romans responded by sending about 40,000 soldiers to crush these norther European Germanic peoples.
- Cana or kana means descendants; these were descendants of Nephi.
- Germanic tribes were Hebraic or of Israelite descent
- there is a connection between Old Anglo Saxon English and Hebrew.
- Tindale knew 7 languages and was a master of Hebrew. He said Hebrew agrees 1000 times more with English than Latin. Tyndale was known like Shakespeare to be a master of the English language.
- European converts to the church have patriarchal blessings revealing Israelite heritage.

### **Episode 2 of Nephites in Europe:**

- we live in a covenant land (America), and all the prophets declared this land to be Gods land; government leaders can't codify sin into law and not have God smite them. The Book of Mormon is all about this.
- before the Lord destroys a wicked nation, he always allows the righteous to escape. Lot and Abraham, Noah and his family, Lehi and his family, and this would be true for righteous Nephites before that civilization was destroyed.
- the Book of Mormon says the Book of Mormon would be given to the Nephites in the last days. This means not all Nephites were killed.
- Jacob 3 and Helaman both indicate that the righteous among the Nephites would be lead away to safety.
- Book of Mormon also speaks of Nephites leaving to the northern lands and never returning, people of Hagoth.
- Book of Mormon says righteous Nephites would be led to safety before the civilization was destroyed.
- D&C 3:16-17 speaks of knowledge of the savior coming to the Nephites from the Book of Mormon.
- 2 Ne. 3 suggests we can find where these Nephites may be by looking at the lineage of Joseph Smith. It suggests Joseph Smith is a Nephite.

Joseph Smith has heritage from Northern Europe, he has no Native American blood in him.

-2 Ne. 3: 23-24 says Nephi's seed would not be destroyed, but do mighty wonders, bringing to pass much restoration to the house of Israel. Thus, we see that Nephi's seed is Joseph Smith.

-William Bradford joining hands with Squanto could well be a Nephite and Lamanite joining hands.

-Pilgrims coming from Europe were Nephites returning home to their land of eternal inheritance. Lehi was given the promise that this was a land for his posterity forever.

-bringing forth new doctrinal insights is never popular. John Nelson has promoted the Nephites in Europe theory.

-D&C 3 clarifies that the Nephites of the latter-days were those whose ancestors never rebel against the covenant.

-The way to know if you are of that ancestor is by revelation to the individual.

-the quest for the Nephite remnant is a stunning blow to the idea that the Book of Mormon isn't historical.

-President Benson says the Book of Mormon is for our day. He said it better shows what happens today than reading newspapers.

-NEPHI says HIS writings are for HIS people in the LAST days.

- [josephsmithfoundation.org/forourday](http://josephsmithfoundation.org/forourday)

## Additional Insights on Nephites in Europe

(also from the Stoddards)

2 Ne. 25:8 Book of Mormon was written to Nephite descendants. Righteous Nephites including the families of Mormon, Moroni, etc., would have foreseen the destruction and would have left in trade ships of others who lived in America.

Nephi's seed would "never perish as long as the earth should stand"

2 Ne. 25 they wrote for THEIR children.

Nephites spread to Europe Japan and elsewhere, we are likely Nephite lineage, the Book of Mormon to us, not just to Lamanites.

If you care about the gospel, your ancestry did too.

The reason the Nephite civilization was able to go from everyone being righteous to just a few years later everyone being wicked is because the righteous left

The Anglo-Saxons arrived by ship. That is the tradition. They were defects coming from America.

We also find evidence of Celts and others who wanted religious freedom in America it was a Haven for Religious freedom.

People of Northern Europe were known for standing up for Christianity and religious freedom. Their type of government isn't what we find in the Bible it's what we find in the Book of Mormon. The people of the Bible rejected freedom in favor of Kings.

Thomas Jefferson gave us our government. He didn't say he based it on the bible, but on the Anglo Saxons. He said they had the best government. Where did they get it? Book of Mormon, king Benjamin.

Right at the time the Nephites left, an uprising of Northern European people (Nephites) taught Rome and won. Historians call these people stinking barbarian thugs without written language, that's their version of the story of the people who beat them.

Self-defense, Rule of law, election of chiefs, reliance on oaths, these were some Anglo-Saxon laws which Nephites had.

Prophets have said the 3 Nephites only work with Nephite descendants, and you see them working with Europeans and Americans.

Heber C Kimball said Nephites went to Japan too.

I was asked “isn’t Nephi of Manasseh?” Some friends have helped explain this to me, here are their insights, names withheld: “The promise was that the Josephites would be numbered among the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. But Lehi is the seed of Joseph.” “Joseph’s two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh were adopted by their grandfather, Jacob, and received inheritances with Jacobs other 10 sons. Joseph’s other sons (his sons born after Ephraim and Manasseh who would inherit the promised land of America where the New Jerusalem will be built) were those promised to inherit the New Jerusalem—where The garden of Eden was—and Adam-ondi-Ahman. It is from Joseph’s other children that Lehi descended from. While living in Jerusalem Lehi and his family lived among the descendants of Manasseh and therefore were thought of as from Manasseh. A true understanding comes from a careful reading of the JST of Genesis 48:5-11.” Further, I hear the Book of Mormon character Ishmael may be of Ephraim.

## Resources on the Restoration

Free Latter-day Saint literature <https://mormontextsproject.org/available-texts/>

Desktop website or phone app: [scriptures.byu.edu](http://scriptures.byu.edu) the scripture citation index. Has searchable Journal of Discourses, scriptures, recent conference talks, etc.

Scripture mastery songs: <https://www.learnreligions.com/lds-seminary-scripture-mastery-songs-2159529>

ChurchOfJesusChrist.org

ComeUntoChrist.org

TabernacleChoir.org

History.ChurchOfJesusChrist.org

JosephSmithPapers.org

UtahFosterCare.org

JustServe.org

Maxwell Institute mi.byu.edu

FairMormon.org

Hannah Stoddard - JosephSmithFoundation.org

bibleinlivingsound.org (audio dramatized bible stories for children for purchase 450 stories 56 hours for \$50)

GoodFight.org shows how Satan has infiltrated the music industry  
see LDS Seminary online free downloads

John Welch – Book of Mormon Temple Sermon, scripture analysis, etc.

Ted R Callister – LDS Apologetics

Avraham Gileadi – LDS Hebrew Isaiah etc.

Carl G Jung – on symbols

Academy for Temple Studies – YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZGYrQeZ5xkZfJ5Q7mjZonw>

Bruce C. Hafen – faith, law, science, etc.

Robert Millett – priesthood, last days, scripture commentary, etc.

S. Michael Wilcox - temples

Brad Wilcox – chastity, grace

Sheri Dew – woman, practical faith

Dennis Prager – scripture commentaries based on logic

Alonzo Gaskill – symbols

Duane S. Crowther – last days, scripture analysis

BH Roberts

Lowell L Bennion  
 Gerald N Lund  
 Gene R Cook  
 John H Groberg  
 Earl C Tingey  
 Spencer J Condie  
 Cleon Skousen  
 Alexander B Morrison  
 C. Max Caldwell  
 Merrill J Bateman  
 -John L Lund -Mesoamerica, social skills of criticism, etc  
 -Mesoamerica BofM pics etc - Rod L Meldrum, Joseph L Brinkerhoff, F  
 Richard Hauck, Diane Wirth, Joseph L Allen, Jonathan Neville  
 -Mark D Ogletree  
 -David Ridges  
 -Dennis Prager: The Rational bible series  
 -Duane S Crowther  
 -Phyllis Shlafley  
 -David Fiorazo  
 -Dinesh D'Souza  
 -Joseph H Hellerman: when the church was a family authentic christian  
 community  
 -Scott Woodward ScottWoodward.org  
 -Bruce Statterfield <http://emp.byui.edu/SATTERFIELDDB/>  
 - John Welch: "The Temple in the Sermon on the Mount and the Gospel  
 of Matthew" (3<sup>rd</sup> Nephi as the Holy of Holies of the Book of Mormon, as  
 an ascension temple text)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SYkMJqSKVEQ> on the Academy  
 for Temple Studies YouTube channel  
 -Hugh Nibley: Hugh Nibley, "The Creation" (Pearl of Great Price  
 Lectures Series - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWjQ1nbA2hU> on  
 the Maxwell Institute YouTube channel  
 -Truman G. Madsen: Gathering and Revelation in Kirtland  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLixfYNh8NM>  
 -John L Sorenson: Mormon's Sources (2011) (Maxwell Institute  
 channel) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PIAxstqKJWs> ;  
 -Evidence For The Book of Abraham - Daniel C Peterson (Maxwell  
 Institute channel)  
 -johnpratt.com

-UniversalModel.com proves scientifically the universal flood, against organic evolution, etc.

## Resources on Philosophy and Religion

Hugh Nibley  
Truman G Madsen  
David L Paulsen  
Terryl Givens  
Sterling W McMurrin  
Orson Pratt  
Jeffrey R Holland  
E E Ericksen  
Richard N Williams

(see science section for authors who specialize in science & religion)

## Resources on Ancient Languages & Religion

Hugh Nibley

Stephen Ricks

Donald Parry

D. Kelly Ogden - scripture commentary, happiness, etc.

Andrew Skinner - scripture commentary, etc.

John Gee

Matthew B Brown – LDS ancient research

John Cahn - [hopeoftheworld.org](http://hopeoftheworld.org) – Hebrew prophecy

C.S. Lewis