

# *THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST*

SPREADING THE SOUL-SAVING MESSAGE OF JESUS

## ANSWERING DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES “Mormonism”

### **Introduction by narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:**

*THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST*. Spreading the soul-saving message of Jesus. And now, Ben Bailey.

“And because my word shall hiss forth, many of the Gentiles shall say, ‘A Bible, a Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible’” (*Book of Mormon*, 2 Nephi 29:3). The *Book of Mormon* claims to be a companion of the New Testament. It claims to teach that which the Bible teaches, and to coincide with the doctrine found in the New Testament. Yet, as the passage I just read suggests, the *Book of Mormon* often mocks the Bible, mocks God, and is in direct opposition to the teaching of Christianity. The Bible claims to be complete (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3), yet the *Book of Mormon* mocks that. God, Who is the Author of the Bible, and Who said that it is complete, also is mocked by the *Book of Mormon* and those who hold to the teaching of God’s Holy Word, the Bible.

Today we are going to examine Mormonism. We will look at its evidence in order to see if it is truly from God, and if the *Book of Mormon* is genuinely “another testament of Jesus Christ.” As in all of our lessons, we want to look fairly at what is said. We want to examine the actual sources so that we can know and understand what is being said. These things are not being invented, but are actual accounts of the evidence so that you can search the Scriptures and decide for yourselves.

What is Mormonism? Where did Mormonism originate? Supposedly, in the years between 1820 and 1830, in Palmyra, New York, a man by the name of Joseph Smith received golden plates from the hand of an angel known as Moroni. And on those plates was supposedly written “another testament of Jesus Christ,” which had been given to Native Americans in order to bring them to a knowledge of Jesus. Is this a claim that is trustworthy? Is the *Book of Mormon* from God? You can know beyond the shadow of a doubt that Joseph Smith and the *Book of Mormon* are not from God. You also can know that the *Book of Mormon* is not compatible with the teaching of the New Testament? How can you know that? There are three ways to prove that Mormonism is not from God.

First, we will notice that Joseph Smith was a false prophet who cannot be trusted. Second, we will examine the *Book of Mormon* in order to examine its evidence, which will show that this is not a perfect, infallible book from God, but was made by men. Third, we will see that the *Book of Mormon* is in direct opposition to, and contradicts, the clear teaching of the Bible.

Let’s begin by examining the character of Joseph Smith. Even before he wrote the *Book of Mormon*, Joseph Smith was well known as being a mystical treasure hunter. In fact, he even had been tried in court (in the case of Joseph Smith v. the State of New York) and found guilty of being a disorderly person, and an imposter who claimed to find buried treasure by looking into stones. This gives us some valuable insight into Joseph Smith’s character. Even before he claimed that the *Book of Mormon* was from God, he already had been tried and convicted of being disorderly, and of having claimed to have found buried treasure when, in fact, he had found nothing. He was an imposter. Multiple sources cite this, and the actual court documents have been found and cited. Smith’s character, at the outset, is not something that is trustworthy.

But Joseph Smith, aside from his character, can be known to be a false prophet. One of the wildest of all of Joseph Smith's prophecy concerns the Moon. He made up a story that the Moon was actually populated by people who were six-feet tall, dressed like Quakers, and lived to be a thousand years old. Think about that for a minute. The Moon is populated by people who are six-feet tall, and who live to be a thousand years old. Is that really true? Of course not! We know that the Moon is not populated. We know that there are no six-foot-tall people (who lived to be a thousand years old!) walking around on the Moon. That is a blatant lie and a false prophecy. How does the Bible instruct us to deal with false prophets? Deuteronomy 18:22 says, "When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him." God says, "If a prophet says, 'I've got a message from God,' and it doesn't come true, you can know that man is not a prophet of God, and what he says is not true." Joseph Smith prophesied about the Moon. We now know that what he prophesied was not true. He, therefore, is not a prophet of the living God.

Let me offer another example of Joseph Smith as a false prophet. In a journal by David Whitmer (who was a follower of Joseph Smith), Smith is reported as having prophesied that God told him to send David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery to Toronto, Canada, to sell the copyright to the *Book of Mormon*. The two men went to Toronto, but were unable to sell the copyright. They then returned and questioned Joseph Smith about his alleged revelation. Smith's answer, as recorded in Whitmer's journal, is probably one of the only true things that he ever said, and is a striking statement about Mormonism. Smith replied, "Some revelations are of God; some revelations are of men; and some revelations are of the devil." Think about that just a minute. Smith told Whitmer and Cowdery, "I received a revelation from God that told me to tell you to get you wagons ready so you can go to Canada to sell the copyright to the *Book of Mormon*." But when they got to Toronto, they could not sell the copyright. So, they said to Smith, "We thought you were a prophet of God. But we got to Canada, and your revelation didn't come true. Give an account of that." Smith simply said, "Some revelations are of God; some revelations are of men; and some revelations are of the devil." That is a striking statement about Joseph Smith as a supposed prophet, and about the *Book of Mormon*. If that is what Smith believed, how could anyone know what is from God, what is from men, and what is from the devil? Deuteronomy 18:22 tells us how we can know: "When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him." You can know that a prophecy is of the devil rather than from God because it did not come true. That, then, is proof of the false prophecy that Joseph Smith made.

There also is a third example. In Oliver Cowdery's journals, he stated that Joseph Smith prophesied that the Lord would return in the year 1835. But that year came and went, and the Lord still had not returned. Smith then made another prophecy—that the Lord would come in 1843. That year came and went, and the Lord had not returned. So, Smith changed the prophecy again to say that the Lord would return in 1891. That year came and went, but the Lord never came. What can we know about Joseph Smith? "When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him." Joseph Smith has been proven, from his prophecies, to be a false prophet, a liar, and not a man to be trusted. If, on multiple occasions, he prophesied things that never happened, and even confessed that some prophecies are of men or of the devil, why would anyone want to put trust in him? He is a man who is blatantly saying things that are not

true. He was known to be a mystical treasure hunter who could not be trusted, and who said things that were not from God. We should not put our faith in someone like that.

Second, you can know that Mormonism is not true because the *Book of Mormon* is not the product of God, but is the product of Joseph Smith, and as such is not a trustworthy book. In fact, from the original 1830 title page of the *Book of Mormon* it is clear where the book originated. That title page says quite clearly, "If there be fault, they be the fault of men." Doesn't that tell you a lot about the *Book of Mormon*? "If there be fault, they be the fault of men." Why would you base your faith and eternal destiny on a book which claims that if there is something wrong, it is from men? The Bible makes no such claims. It claims to be the perfect will of God that is absolute truth and free from error (Jn. 17:17). At the bottom of the title page in the 1830 version of the *Book of Mormon*, it says "Joseph Smith, author and proprietor." The *Book of Mormon* is not "another revelation of Jesus Christ." It is not from God. Joseph Smith is the sole "author and proprietor." He invented the contents of the book. It was his fabrication. It did not come from God, as the original 1830 title page freely confesses. We need to realize that the Bible **is** from God. It claims that every word within it is from God. Notice 2 Timothy 3:16-17,

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

How much Scripture is "inspired of God"? **All** Scripture is inspired of God, and will make us complete. Look at Galatians 1:6-9, and compare those verses with the idea of "another Gospel." Can there be "another Gospel"? Paul said in Galatians 1:6-9,

"I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed."

Joseph Smith claimed that the angel Moroni brought down "another Gospel." Yet the Scripture says, "Even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed." The striking truth is that the *Book of Mormon* is "another Gospel," and thus is accursed because it is not from God. Thus, it cannot be trusted. Now let's examine the evidence which shows that to be the case.

You can know that the *Book of Mormon* is not from God because it defies simple science. In Alma 24:16 the *Book of Mormon* says, "Burying swords in the earth will keep them bright and unruined." It does not take much common sense to know that if you bury a sharp, bright, metal sword, it will not get brighter, but instead will get rusty. The simple rules of science tell us that if we place metal in the ground, it will rust instead of getting brighter.

Also, the *Book of Mormon* says in 2 Nephi 30:5-7 and 3 Nephi 2:15 that once the Indians accepted its teachings, they would become a "white and delightsome people." Do you understand what that is saying? The dark skin and wild culture of the Indians is ungodly and evil. Think about that just a moment? Isn't that promoting racism at the highest extreme (by implying that the white race is the only one that is pure and bright)? That is not what God said, and it is not what the Scripture teaches. So, here we have yet another thing about the *Book of Mormon* that is not scientifically true. In 3 Nephi 20:16 and 21:12 we find statements that "lions are beasts of the forest." There are no lions in the forest because lions live on savannahs, not in forests. That is scientifically proven. We know it because we have studied them and cataloged where they live. We do not find lions in the forests. Here is yet another proof which shows that the *Book of Mormon* is not true. In 1 Nephi

13:6, Alma 4:6, Ether 9:17, and Ether 10:24 we are told that silk was produced in the Americas. But at the time of the alleged writing of the *Book of Mormon*, there was no silk produced in the Americas. Rather, all of it was imported from Asia. That is a historical fact that is a well-known truth. Again, we see that the *Book of Mormon* does not fit with science or history.

The *Book of Mormon* also defies common literary and grammatical rules. Did you know that from the time the 1830 version of the *Book of Mormon* was written, 3,913 changes were made? I'm not talking about commas, periods, or the dotting of i's. Words were added; words were removed; double negatives were corrected; blatantly misspelled words were corrected; erroneous facts were removed, and other facts were put in to make the book appear right. There were 3,913 changes made to a book that supposedly came from God?! The God of the Bible did not write the *Book of Mormon* because God is perfect, and the book that He wrote (the Bible) is perfect. The *Book of Mormon* is seen not to be from God because it is fraught with errors that constantly had to be corrected in order to appear as if it was right.

The *Book of Mormon* also is not from God because it defies simple common sense. In Ether 2:17-22 there is an account of immigrants who supposedly were preparing to come to the New World. God allegedly told them to make eight air-tight, square vessels. When Jared complained about the people dying from a lack of oxygen, God told him, "Cut a hole in the top of each ship, and one hole in the bottom. Then plug them up. When you begin to suffocate, open one of the holes. If water gushes in, then you will know that you have opened the wrong hole." Think about that for a moment. Build eight square, air-tight vessels. Make a hole in the top and bottom. If you take the plug out and water starts to pour in, plug it up before you die. Why didn't God just tell the people what end was up, and what plug to tell out? Why did the people have to go through a process of trial and error? That does not make good common sense.

In 2 Nephi 13:24 we find another statement that defies common sense. The text there says that baldness is caused by sin. We know that is not the case. Certain hormones that a person may possess often can cause him to go bald. It may even be hereditary. But sin is not a trigger for baldness. Some of the grossest sinners in the world have lots of hair! Conversely, there are people who are bald, but who are not those types of sinners. These types of things defy common sense. Square ships with holes in them, through which water can gush in? Baldness caused by sin? It does not make good common sense.

The *Book of Mormon* also is a book that contradicts itself. The *Book of Mormon* says that God's Word is unchangeable. In Alma 41:8 we read, "Now the decrees of God are unalterable. Therefore, the way is prepared that whoever may walk may walk therein and be saved." In Alma 41:8 the *Book of Mormon* says that God's decrees are unalterable. They cannot be changed, and stand forever. Let's see if the *Book of Mormon* continues that theme. In the Mormon book, *Doctrine and Covenants*, 56:4-5, we see God making a prophecy by saying, "Wherefore I, the Lord, command and revoke, as it seemeth me good; and all this to be answered upon the heads of the rebellious, saith the Lord. Wherefore, I revoke the commandment which was given unto my servants Thomas B. Marsh and Ezra Thayre, and give a new commandment unto my servant Thomas, that he shall take up his journey speedily to the land of Missouri, and my servant Selah J. Griffin shall also go with him." God said in the *Book of Mormon* that His commandments are unalterable. Then something changed and God said, "I revoke that commandment. I'm changing it. Here's what I want you to do now." But I thought that Mormonism taught that God's commandments are unalterable? Yet the *Book of Mormon* has God saying on one occasion that His commandments never change, while in another instance God says, "I changed it." Such is not something that passes the test of good, solid evidence.

We also know that the *Book of Mormon* contradicts itself because of its treatment for and against the issue of men having multiple wives. For example, in Jacob 2:24 God condemned multiple wives. "Behold David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord." Here, God said that the fact that David and Solomon had many wives was "abominable" because it was not right, and He did not approve it (which made it sinful and condemned). The problem with that is in *Doctrine and Covenants* 132:1 we read, "Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand to know and understand wherein I the Lord justified my servants Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and Solomon, as touching the principle and doctrine of their having many wives and concubines." You cannot have it both ways! If God said in Jacob 2:24 of David and Solomon that their multiple wives were "an abomination," and then in *Doctrine and Covenants* 132:1 God said that He "justified David and Solomon," you know that one of two things is true. Either God contradicted Himself, or the *Book of Mormon* contradicts itself and God did not write it.

The *Book of Mormon* also is a book that contradicts clear facts and teachings of the Bible that have been backed up by history itself. For example, in Colossians 1:18 the Bible says that Jesus is the only Head of the church. Matthew 28:18 says that He has "all authority." Ephesians 1:22-23 teaches that He is the Head of the body. Thus, in Scripture Jesus is the only one with preeminence, and the only Head of the church. Yet in *Doctrine and Covenants* 28:2-6 Joseph Smith is the head of the Mormon Church. Can you have it both ways? Can Jesus be the only preeminent One Who is the Head of the church, yet Joseph Smith also be head of the church? You cannot have it both ways. Since we have already shown Joseph Smith to be a liar and false prophet, then let's put our trust in Jesus, the perfect, sinless Son of God.

Here is a glaring example of a Mormon contradiction. In Matthew 2:1 and in Matthew 21:17 we are told that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Joseph and Mary were being enrolled as part of a census. There was no room in the inn, so they stayed in a barn for animals. Jesus was born there—in Bethlehem. That is not only a biblical fact, but there is historical evidence to back that up. The problem is that in Alma 7:10 the *Book of Mormon* prophesied that Jesus would be born of Mary in Jerusalem. So, you either have to believe the *Book of Mormon*, which teaches that Jesus was born in Jerusalem, or you have to believe the Bible, which teaches (correctly) that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Mormons often claim that the *Book of Mormon* and the Bible go hand in hand. They say that the Bible is a good book, and that the *Book of Mormon* is a good companion to it which teaches the same thing. Do not buy into that lie! The *Book of Mormon* blatantly contradicts the Bible, which is backed up by historical evidence, while the *Book of Mormon* is not.

Here is another example. The Scriptures teach, and it has been historically proven, that the church began somewhere around A.D. 30 to 33. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus said, "I will build My church...." In Acts 2 when the first Gospel sermon was preached, people were added to that church (Acts 2:47). That is what the New Testament teaches regarding the beginning of the church. Yet in the *Book of Mormon* (Mosiah 18:17) we are taught that the church began in 147 B.C. Think about that for a moment. What had yet to happen in 147 B.C.? Jesus hadn't even been born! He hadn't lived a perfect life. He hadn't died. The Gospel had not been preached. And the church had not been started. In the *Book of Mormon* the church of Jesus Christ starts almost 175 years before Jesus died on the cross and the came into existence! How can that be possible? The teachings of the Bible and the teachings of the *Book of Mormon* cannot both be true! Thus, we need to stick to the truthfulness of the New Testament.

Here is another clear, blatant error made in the *Book of Mormon*. In Acts 11:26 (recorded around the year A.D. 40) we learn that the disciples were “first called Christians in Antioch.” Yet when we look at the *Book of Mormon*, Alma 46:13-16 (which supposedly was written in 73 B.C.), it refers to Nephites as “Christians.” Stop and think about that. In 73 B.C., what had yet to happen? That was 73 years before Jesus would be born. It was a hundred years before the first Gospel sermon would be preached and anyone would be added to the church. In the *Book of Mormon*, one hundred years before Christ had died on the cross or the Gospel had been preached, there are “Christians.” How could such be the case?! You cannot have Christians that many years before Christ, or before Christianity even came into existence.

So what can we know about the *Book of Mormon*? We can know that Joseph Smith was a false prophet, and cannot be trusted. We can know that the *Book of Mormon* defies science and common sense, and contradicts itself. And we can know that the *Book of Mormon* is in direct opposition to both the Bible and clear historical facts. It is not “of God.” It is a fabricated, make-believe story concocted by Joseph Smith. It also is one of the greatest religious hoaxes that has ever been perpetuated upon mankind. If you buy into the *Book of Mormon*, and if you put the salvation of your immortal soul at stake by trusting in it, you will perish on the Day of Judgment. The *Book of Mormon* cannot save you. Mormon doctrine cannot get you to Heaven. The only way you can be saved is through obeyed the Bible and the teachings of Jesus. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father except by Me” (Jn. 14:6). Remember that there is no other Gospel to be found outside the words of Jesus Christ. And if you will submit your life to the Gospel (not the *Book of Mormon*) and obey it, you can be saved and be right with God. My prayer is that you will do exactly that today.

**Narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:**

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## STUDY QUESTIONS FOR “MORMONISM”

1. According to material presented at the beginning of this study, how does the *Book of Mormon* view the New Testament?
2. Who is the originator of Mormonism?
3. Who allegedly gave the person mentioned in question #2 above some “golden plates upon which was written “another testament of Jesus Christ”?”
4. To what group of people had this “other testament of Jesus Christ” supposedly been given before it was revealed to the man mentioned in question #2 above?
5. What historical background do we possess regarding the character of the man mentioned in question #2 above?
6. What prophecy was made by the man mentioned in question #2 above regarding the Moon?
7. Did the man’s prophecy about the Moon come true?
8. What prophecy (or prophecies) did the man mentioned in question #2 above make regarding the Second Coming of Jesus Christ?
9. Did the man’s prophecy (or prophecies) about the Second Coming of Christ come true?
10. What does Deuteronomy 18:22 say about a person who claims to be a prophet of God?
11. According to Deuteronomy 18:22, does the originator of Mormonism qualify as a genuine prophet from God?
12. According to the title page of the 1830 version of the *Book of Mormon*, the man mentioned in question #2 above not only was its “proprietor,” but also its \_\_\_\_\_?
13. What did the apostle Paul say in Galatians 1:6-9 someone attempting to perpetuate “another gospel”?
14. In Alma 41:8 the *Book of Mormon* says that God’s decrees are unalterable. Yet in the Mormon book, *Doctrine and Covenants* (56:4-5), God allegedly said that He was revoking some of His previous decrees. What does this tell you about Mormonism’s “holy books”?
15. The *Book of Mormon* says in 2 Nephi 30:5-7 and 3 Nephi 2:15 that as soon as American Indians accepted its teachings, they would become a “white and delightsome people.” What does this tell you about the author of the *Book of Mormon* and the teachings of Mormonism?
16. According to Matthew 16:18, Ephesians 1:22-23, Ephesians 4:4, and Colossians 1:18, how many churches did Jesus Christ establish?