

Mormonism

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1 John 4:1

Several years ago, we had a young family stay with us that had some strange customs and beliefs. Gary and Pam were Mormons. While Pam was very comfortable with Mormonism, Gary had some difficulties with it, so we talked some about it. Mormons are viewed as being very moral and wonderful people, but there are some very serious problems about their religion.

Winsome TV ads invite people to learn the teachings of Christ from the Mormons, who call themselves the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints. Mormonism draws very heavily on the Christian vocabulary, and claim to use the Bible as well as the Book of Mormon, but in actuality, they know very little about the Bible. Where there are contradictions between the two books, they accept the Book of Mormon as the truth. We will get into that a little later.

Because the Mormons base their religion on a book called the Book of Mormon, it is imperative that we examine its source, and verify its truthfulness.

This book was written by Joseph Smith in 1830, who called himself a “Prophet, Seer, and Revelator of God.” He claimed to have translated it from writings on gold plates that were shown to him by an angel of God. If this book is truth, then we should follow it, if it is false, then it should be exposed.

There are many proofs that Joseph Smith was a false prophet, but Mormons typically, will not accept them. From the biblical evidence that contradicts Mormon theology, to the contradictions within its own history and doctrine, proofs abound. But Mormon’s, completely dedicated to their religion and their testimony, cannot and will not see the evidence. They rely not on biblical evidence, not on historical evidence, but rather trust a “testimony” that Mormonism is the restored church and Joseph Smith its true prophet.

One of the tests of whether or not a belief is grounded in reality is whether or not it can be proven to be true or false. If someone says, “I don’t care what evidence you show me, I will always believe,” then that person’s faith is not rooted in reality. And since Christianity is a religion of history, crucifixion, resurrection, an empty tomb, etc., it is a religion rooted in reality. If it could be proven beyond doubt that Jesus did not rise from the dead, then Christianity is a false religion. Likewise, if it

could be proven that Joseph Smith was a false prophet, then Mormonism is a false religion. It just so happens that there is such a proof.

- 1 John 4:1, *“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”*
- Prov. 14:12, *“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”*

History

Before we get into the scriptures, let us look at the history of events concerning Joseph Smith and these writings.

Joseph Smith's vision.

In 1820, Lucy Mack Smith decided to join the Presbyterian Church, and asked her children to join her. Some did and some didn't. Joseph Sr. refused to accompany them. The patriarch had been telling his family that God sent him religious visions in his dreams which meant that he didn't need to go to church. Joseph Jr. ended up not joining any religion either.

One day in the spring of that year, Joseph went to a grove of trees near his home and prayed for God to tell him which church to join. He claimed that God the Father and Jesus Christ appeared before him in a pillar of light brighter than full daylight. God told Joseph to join none of the churches because they had been corrupted. God also told him that His power and authority was taken from the earth in the first century A.D., and that it was to be restored shortly.

Joseph didn't tell anyone about this vision until 1838. He also recounted at least three different versions of it. In one telling, for example, God appeared to him with Jesus and some angels, in another account: no angels.

Joseph Smith guilty of fraud.

For at least five years in the mid-1820's, and possibly for many years thereafter, Joseph Smith was deeply involved in occult divination. From 1822, when he discovered a “seer stone” in Willard Chases' well, through 1827, when he renounced “glass-looking” in a dramatic confrontation with his father-in-law, Isaac Hale, Smith was known for his powers with the seer stone. He could see unknown things, advising money-diggers

on the location of buried treasure, hidden mines, etc. He would be paid for his services. He had been tried and found guilty of this fraud.

Smith reported that on the night of September 21, 1823, the angel Moroni descended in a brilliant pillar of light and showed Smith a stone chest which was buried in Hill Cumorah in the beginning of the fifth century. It held a book of scripture written on gold plates, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants of the North American continent, who were actually the descendants of Jewish settlers led there from Jerusalem by God around 600 B.C. The chest also contained the Breastplate of Jewish antiquity, as well as the Urim and the Thummim — the seer stones which would grant Smith the magic ability to read the ancient manuscript.

On March 20, 1826, Joseph Smith Jr. appeared in civil court in Bainbridge, New York. He was accused of being a “disorderly person or an imposter.” This meant perpetrating fraud. Relatives of a farmer by the name of Josiah Stool (sometimes spelled Stowell) claimed that Smith was paid money after convincing the elderly Josiah that he could find buried money, salt mines, and other things of value by divination.

The records of that court appearance indicated that the trial led Smith’s conviction, but no mention has been found concerning the sentence. The most prevalent conclusion is that the justice of the peace ordered Joseph to leave town (referred to in those times as “leg bail”).

While working for Stool, Joseph and his father had boarded at the home of Isaac Hale in Harmony, Pennsylvania. There Joseph met Hale’s tall, dark-haired daughter, Emma. Joseph and Emma were wed in the home of Zechariah Tarble of South Bainbridge, New York on January 18, 1827. They had been forced to elope due to the strong objections to the marriage by Emma’s father. The newlyweds immediately moved to Manchester to live with Joseph Sr.

Moroni finally told Joseph to take possession of the gold plates and paraphernalia on September 22, 1827. Somehow, word had gotten around about the existence of the plates, because on the very day that the couple retrieved the plates, treasure hunters were lying in wait to claim them. After the crowd had failed to extract the items from the Smiths, Joseph wrote that, luckily, he had had the forethought to hide the plates in a hollow birch log on the way home.

Willard Chase and his sister, Sally, apparently led a mob of a dozen townspeople on several efforts to wrest the plates from the Smiths. They came up empty despite many attempts.

In the fall, the couple fled to Harmony, Pennsylvania in order to escape the constant persecution by treasure hunters. They intended to move in with Isaac Hale (Emma’s father), but when Isaac was told about

the “wonderful book of Plates,” he dubiously asked to see them. “I was allowed to feel the weight of the box, and they gave me to understand that the book of plates was then in the box — into which, however, I was not allowed to look.”

This didn’t satisfy Emma’s father, so he issued an ultimatum: either show him the contents of the box, or it was forbidden inside the house. As an interim solution, Joseph hid the plates in the woods. Some weeks later, Joseph and Emma moved into a small two-room house belonging to Emma’s brother Jesse, which was located about 150 yards from Isaac’s home.

Joseph Smith's translation.

Once they had moved into Jesse’s house, Joseph fetched the box. Using the Urim and Thummim, he began to translate the characters on the gold plates into English. Of the seer stones, my concordance remarks: “The Hebrew for this phrase probably means ‘the curses and the perfections.’ The Hebrew word ‘Urim’ begins with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet (aleph) and ‘Thummim’ begins with the last letter (tav). They were sacred lots and were often used in times of crisis to determine the will of God (see Num. 27:21). It has been suggested that if Urim (‘curses’) dominated when the lots were cast the answer was ‘no,’ but if Thummim (‘perfections’) dominated it was ‘yes.’ In any event, their ‘every decision’ was ‘from the Lord’ (Pr 16:33).”

While Smith was transcribing the Book of Mormon, he sought money to pay for its printing. Martin Harris, a well-to-do farmer, was prepared to sell his farm for \$10,000 and give the money to Smith to finance the publication. This outraged Harris’s wife Lucy. To placate her and satisfy his own curiosity, Harris asked to see the gold plates. Smith instead offered to show Harris a hand-copied reproduction of a small part of the gold plates.

Harris took the reproduction to Professor Charles Anthon of Columbia University. Anthon told Harris that the symbols belonged to no known language, and he suspected that the whole story of the gold plates was either a hoax or a fraud. Harris told Smith, who responded that the process of engraving the gold plates was so long and tedious, that Mormon (the author of the ancient text) had turned to a “shorthand” Egyptian alphabet obviously unknown to Anthon. Smith called it “Reformed Egyptian.” Soon after, the so-called Anthon Transcript disappeared.

Harris gave Smith \$5,000 to print 3,000 copies, for a profit motive. Harris later served as Smith’s scribe, copying down the holy dictation while Smith spoke from behind a blanket stretched across the room. In

about two months the two men had produced the “Book of Lehi,” composing the first 116 pages from the plates of Mormon.

In an attempt to convert his wife, Harris took the 116 pages back to Palmyra to show her. He returned to Harmony a few weeks later weeping and distraught. He told Joseph that the pages had disappeared from his house and were simply irrecoverable.

Joseph Smith must have concluded that Lucy Harris had stashed away the 116 pages in order to discredit the eventual published work. If and when the re-translated Book of Lehi failed to match the pages that Lucy held in reserve somewhere, the legitimacy of the new work would be ruined.

So, Joseph simply didn’t re-translate that section of the gold plates. He explained that God was so outraged that Smith had let Harris carry away the first translation that He had taken away the Urim and Thummim. Later, God returned the seer stones to Smith but instructed him not to translate the material that had been lost. Thus, the Book of Mormon begins with the Book of Nephi and not with Lehi.

In fact, Smith continued in his translation of the Book of Mormon picking up right where he left off, only going back to redo that section of the early history (Nephi’s account of it) after everything else had been completed.

Smith and Cowdery started over on the transcription job and had completed the 275,000 word manuscript in early July of 1829. They had to have averaged about 3,700 words a day.

Joseph Smith stated that the plates were taken away by an angel. Thus, they are not available for examination and analysis.

Joseph Smith's translation of the Egyptian hieroglyphics.

In July of 1835, an Irishman named Michael Chandler brought an exhibit of four Egyptian mummies and papyri to Kirtland Ohio, then the home of the Mormons. The papyri contained Egyptian hieroglyphics. In 1835 hieroglyphics were unreadable.

As Prophet and Seer of the Church, Joseph Smith was given permission to look at the papyri scrolls in the exhibit and to everyone’s shock, revealed that “one of the rolls contained the writings of Abraham, another the writings of Joseph of Egypt” (History of the Church, Vol. 2: 236. July 1835). The Church bought the exhibit for \$2400. Joseph finished the translation of the Book of Abraham some time later, but the book of Joseph was never translated. The papyri were lost soon afterwards and thought to have been destroyed in a fire in Chicago in 1871. There was, therefore, no way to validate Joseph’s translation. If

the papyri were re-discovered and translated it would either prove or disprove the abilities of Joseph as a prophet of God. After all, he was supposed to be a prophet and have the abilities of a Seer as the Book of Mormon and the Book of Abraham supposedly proved.

In October of 1880 The Pearl of Great Price, a collection of writings, which contained the book of Abraham, was recognized as scripture by the Mormon Church.

To every one's surprise, in 1966 the papyri were rediscovered in one of the vault rooms of the New York's metropolitan Museum of Art. The Deseret News of Salt Lake City on Nov. 27, 1967 acknowledged the rediscovery of the papyri. On the back of the papyri were "drawings of a temple and maps of the Kirtland, Ohio area." There could be no doubt that this was the original document from which Joseph Smith translated the book of Abraham.

With the papyri rediscovered and Egyptian hieroglyphics decipherable since the late 1800's, it would then be an easy task of translating the papyri and proving once and for all that Joseph Smith was a prophet with the gift of "Seer" as he and the Mormon church have claimed. This would then prove the truth of the Book of Mormon and the Book of Abraham and would vindicate Joseph Smith as a true prophet of God.

What do the Experts say? Joseph Smith copied three drawings from the Egyptian scrolls, labeled them Facsimile No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3, and incorporated them into the Book of Abraham with explanations of what they were. Egyptologists have viewed the drawings and found Joseph Smith's interpretation of them to be wrong. But, the Mormons, in defense of the sacred book, maintained that the Facsimiles alone were not sufficient to prove that Joseph Smith was erring in his translating abilities. With the rediscovery of the papyri, not only were there the same drawings in the scrolls, but so was the text from which Joseph Smith made his translation. It was now possible to absolutely determine the accuracy of Smith's translating abilities.

Facsimile No. 1

Joseph Smith said that Facsimile No. 1 was of a bird as the "Angel of the Lord" with "Abraham fastened upon an altar," "being offered up as a sacrifice by a false priest." The pots under the altar were various gods "Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmackrah, Korash, Pharaoh," etc. In reality, this is "an embalming scene showing the deceased lying on a lion-couch."

In the original papyri, this drawing is attached to hieroglyphics from which Joseph derived the beginning of the book of Abraham which begins with the words, "In the Land of the Chaldeans, at the residence of my father, I, Abraham, saw that it was needful for me to obtain another

place of residence” (1:1). In reality, the hieroglyphics translate as, “Osiris shall be conveyed into the Great Pool of Khons — and likewise Osiris Hor, justified, born to Tikhebyt, justified — after his arms have been placed on his heart and the Breathing permit (which [Isis] made and has writing on its inside and outside) has been wrapped in royal linen and placed under his left arm near his heart; the rest of the mummy-bandages should be wrapped over it. The man for whom this book was copied will breath forever and ever as the bas of the gods do.” This was a description as to how to embalm and mummify a dead body. The whole document was mistranslated, yet the Mormons still treat these translations as truth.

Joseph Smith — false prophet.

Looking back, it’s clear to unbelievers that Joseph Smith didn’t do a great translation of the Book of Abraham. When, in 1967, the papyri were compared, his errors of translation were great. For example, the thirteenth and fourteenth verses of Abraham 1 were translated from a single character resembling a backward E. Smith translated this one character into 76 words, with nine proper names and eight other nouns. The character for the Egyptian god Khonsu was translated by Smith into 177 words in Abraham 1:16-19.

It should be quite obvious that present scholarship has revealed that Joseph Smith did not translate the Book of Abraham by the power of God as he had claimed. It follows that if he did not translate the Book of Abraham by the power of God, and then neither did he with the Book of Mormon.

When Joseph first gave his translation, hieroglyphics were undecipherable. Today they are since the discovery of the “Rosetta Stone.” He was safe in saying anything he wanted to and there would be no way of proving him wrong. But with the resurfacing of the same papyri he used to do his Book of Abraham translation, and the fact that he did not in any way do it correctly, should be proof enough that Joseph Smith lied about his abilities from God. He has been shown to be a false prophet.

There are many other things in Joseph Smith’s life that show he was a false prophet and a crooked person. There are court records of his criminal life that still exist today.

Illegal bank.

He started an illegal bank (God told him to, but State Legislature refused him a charter). He started one anyway. To attract depositors, he filled several strongboxes with sand, lead, old iron, and stones, then covered them with a single layer of fifty-cent silver coins. Prospective

customers were brought into the vault and shown the heaping chests of silver. For the next month investors came like bees to honey. He used the money to buy up several parcels of land about town and a 140 acre farm. Lawsuits were filed against the bank, and people demanded their money back, and he had to escape for his life, leaving behind huge debts.

When he was drumming up members for his religion, and some town newspaper would write any articles against him, he would have their printing press destroyed.

Joseph Smith and the American Indians.

Smith's claim that the American Indians were descendants of the Jews who came to America in 600 B.C. is bogus. Archeologists say there is no proof of this, in fact there is proof to the opposite. The bone structures of the ancient American Indians were not of those of the Jews, but of those of Eastern Asia.

The idea that Jesus Christ visited the American Indians and gave them the Christian religion as formed in the Book of Mormon is also bogus. Their religion as shown in the archeological record has always been the worshipping of animals, sun, moon, etc.

Joseph's Smith prophets denounced him.

Two of the three of his early apostles and witnesses denounced Joseph Smith as false before they died. Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris were his main witnesses concerning the golden plates. Joseph Smith called Harris a man "too mean to mention; a wicked man"; Cowdery rejected Mormonism and joined the Methodist church. The third witness, David Whitmer, called Smith a fallen prophet.

Martin Harris, the first convert to Mormonism outside of Joseph's family, is a virtual case study in religious instability. During his life, he changed religious affiliations some twelve or thirteen times, including five shifts in faith even after becoming a follower of Joseph Smith. At one time, after being excommunicated from the Church, he became a follower of Anna Lee, the founder of a sect known as the Shakers. Phineas Young, brother of future prophet Brigham Young, stated that Martin Harris claimed his testimony for the Shaker faith was stronger than his testimony for the Book of Mormon.

The most damaging evidence against the Book of Mormon witnesses comes from Martin Harris. In a letter by an early Mormon convert, Stephen Burnett, he explains why he decided to leave the Church: "...but when I came to hear Martin Harris state in public that he never saw the plates with his natural eyes only in vision and imagination, neither Oliver nor David & also that the eight witnesses never saw them &

hesitated to sign that instrument for that reason, but were persuaded to do it, the last pedestal gave away...I therefore three weeks since in the Stone Chapel...the reasons why I took the course which I was resolved to do, and renounced the Book of Mormon.”

Three other apostles also left the Mormon church.

More false prophecies.

Joseph Smith made prophecies that were never fulfilled, such as “war will be poured out upon all nations beginning at South Carolina, and that there would be famine, plague, earthquake, and an ... end of all nations.”

Deut. 18:22, *“When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.”*

What do the Mormons believe and what does the Bible say?

That there are many gods.

Joseph Smith, “I wish to declare I have always and in all congregations when I have preached on the subject of the Deity, it has been the plurality of Gods.” (History of the Church 6:474).

Brigham Young, the second president and prophet of the Mormon Church, “How many Gods there are, I do not know. But there never was a time when there were not Gods...” (Journal of Discourses 7:333).

- Deut. 4:35, *“Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him.”*
- Isaiah 44:8, *“Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.”*
- 1 Cor. 8:4, *“... there is none other God but one.”*

That the God Elohim is the same as Adam and also the Father of Christ, and that he was once a man as we are.

Orson Hyde, “God our Heavenly Father was perhaps once a child, and mortal like we are, and rose step by step in the scale of progress, in the

school of advancement; has moved forward and overcome, until He has arrived at the point where He now is.” (Journal of Discourses 1:123).

“... our Father in heaven was once a man as we are now, capable of physical death.” (Achieving a Celestial Marriage, pg. 132).

- Psalms 90:2, “*Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.*”
- Psalms 93:2, “*Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.*”

That man and gods are the same.

John Widtsoe, “God and man are of the same race, differing only in their degrees of advancement.” (Gospel Through the Ages, pg. 107).

Joseph Smith, “God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens.” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, pg. 345).

Milton Hunter, “No prophet of record gave more complete and forceful explanations of the doctrine that men may become Gods than did the American Prophet, Joseph Smith.” (Gospel Through the Ages, pg. 115).

- Isaiah 43:10, “*Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.*”
- Rev. 21:3, “*And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*”

That man as Gods in heaven will have wives and bear children.

Brigham Young, “In the resurrection, men who have been faithful and diligent in all things in the flesh ... and [are] worthy to be crowned Gods, ... will be ordained to organize matter, that is, to be creators in their own right. Rather than just being able to produce physical children, now they can produce spirit children.”

Orson Pratt, “Who will be the subjects in the kingdom which they will rule ...? Their own children, their own posterity will be the citizens of their kingdoms; in other words, the patriarchal order will prevail there to

the endless ages of eternity, and the children of each patriarch will be his while eternal ages roll on.” (Journal of Discourses, 15:319).

- Matt. 22:30, *“For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.”*

That Joseph Smith taught that plurality of wives was God’s plan.

On July 12, 1843, Joseph Smith claimed to receive a new revelation that men were to have many wives and concubines, and declared it “a new and everlasting covenant.” (Doctrine and Covenants, 132:1,4).

Those who rejected it were damned. It appears that his first wife opposed the new wives her husband was bringing into his home; so he received a revelation specifically for her: “And let mine handmaid, Emma Smith, receive all those that have been given to my servant Joseph ... But if she will not abide this commandment she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord.” (Doctrine and Covenants 132:51-56). It must have been hard to have a husband who lusted after other women, and claimed to be God’s spokesman.

Brigham Young had 17 wives and 56 children. John Lee had 19 wives and 64 children.

Mormons teach that Jesus had two wives, Mary and Martha, and had children by them. Of course the Bible says no such thing.

Orson Hyde, “It will be borne in mind that once on a time, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and on a careful reading of that transaction, it will be discovered that no less a person than Jesus Christ was married on that occasion. If he was never married, his intimacy with Mary and Martha, and the other Mary also whom Jesus loved, must have been highly unbecoming and improper to say the best of it.” (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 4, p. 259).

Hyde’s conclusion fails for the simple reason that Jesus was invited to the wedding in Cana. John 2:1-2, *“And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.”* If he were indeed the groom, such an invitation would not have been necessary.

U.S. law forbade polygamy with a criminal offence in 1871. In 1890, Mormon President Wilford Woodruff officially abolished polygamy as the practice of the Mormon Church, no matter what Joseph Smith had said about it being “an eternal covenant.”

- Matt. 19:9, *“And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth*

adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”

- Eph. 5:31, *“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.”*

A look at the Lord’s Supper.

1 Cor. 11:23-29, *“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.”*

After the turn of the century, the Mormon Church changed their practice from using wine in the Lord’s Supper to using water, because they thought wine was a substance of the devil. This goes along in keeping with their thinking that even coffee and tea are wrong to drink.

Beware of Mormonism’s attacks against the Bible.

It is difficult to dialogue with Mormons who give a weak service to the Bible in their eighth article of faith,

“The Bible is the Word of God insofar as it is translated correctly”, but in reality have no confidence in it because of these alleged problems:

- It has translation problems (copying problems down through the ages).
- It has contradictions and errors.
- It is missing some books and teachings.
- It is only part of God’s revelation to us.
- It is unclear and hard to interpret properly.

The translation, or transmission issue.

There are many manuscripts all over the world (other languages as well as Hebrew and Greek) from different periods of time that when compared show that God has kept His Word, as He said He would.

- Psalms 12:6-7, *“The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.”*
- 1 Pet. 1:23-25, *“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”*
- Matt. 5:18, *“For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”*
- Matt. 24:35, *“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”*

Contradictions.

The world has thought they have found contradictions in the Bible, but to the Bible student they are mostly easily explained.

It is missing some books and teachings and it is only part of God’s revelation to us.

There are some places in the Bible that make reference to other written things that we don’t have, such as Paul’s writing to some congregation, but its exclusion doesn’t mean we are without part of God’s plan. It may be things already covered elsewhere.

- 2 Tim. 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 perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”*
- 2 Pet. 1:3, *“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.”*
- Jude 1:3, *“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and*

exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

It is unclear and hard to interpret properly.

If there is any passage that we have difficulty with, there are many resource materials available to assist us: dictionaries, lexicons, concordances, etc. There is no better substitute to having a good knowledge of what God wants us to than to study his word. Unfortunately, most people fail to perform this in their lives.

By the way, the Book of Mormon has been modified over the years to try to reword things that are embarrassing for them. I have a book that shows both the old and new versions showing all their many changes.

Conclusion.

Joseph Smith claims to have received his instruction from an angel of God. Even if what he says happened, what does God have to say about receiving such a message from Him?

- 1 John 4:1, *“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”*
- Gal. 1:8-12, *“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”*

