CONTINUOUS REVELATION:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE MORMON PHILOSOPHY

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THESIS: CONTINUOUS REVELATION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE
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ABSTRACT

A fundamental philosophy within the Judea-Christian tradition is revelation. Prophets and Apostles of God have made hundreds of statements which both foreshadow and direct future events. But this philosophy has been abandoned in modern times to make room for another philosophy, a philosophy which has declared the heavens closed.

Though religions generally struggle with changing values and new doctrines, relatively few major religions have declared that God directs those changes. One church which has reversed that trend in *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, often referred to as the *Mormons*.

This thesis examines the Latter-day Saint claims of modern revelation within the foundation of the philosophy of the past. Scripture accepted by traditional Christianity, and scripture accepted only within Mormonism, will be used in making this examination, as will the opinions of scholars both friendly and hostile to the claims of Mormonism.
INTRODUCTION

Two men stood in the house of the Lord before a large congregation of listeners. The moment was dramatically tense, for each was giving meaningful councils on a matter of national importance. The Jewish listeners knew that each of the men claimed to be a prophet, a spokesman for the Lord God of Israel. One spoke of peace, and promised that within two years the oppression that they suffered would be ended. The other challenged his words, and foretold the continuation of injustice. Those present believed the obvious variance was evidence that one of the men was not a prophet, but an impostor and a fraud. The question was which one? At this critical moment, the Jewish congregation heard one of the men propose a test. "The test," he announced, "should be applied by all who wanted to know whether an individual spoke as a prophet of God." He said:

When the word of the prophet shall come to pass,
then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him.¹

This narrative, taken from the pages of the Book of Jeremiah, illustrates a fundamental philosophy adhered to by the nation of Israel for millennia. It was a philosophy which caused them to follow prophets of God like Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, out of Egypt and out of Babylon and hopefully back into the presence of God. Now abandoned by orthodox Judaism in favor of the study of the words of these long dead prophets, the philosophy that living prophets can still speak the words of a living God stirs the hearts of others who can continue to believe.
Though this illustration is drawn from the history of Judaism, a religion that long ago claimed the heavens sealed, the concept of continuing revelation is a problem common to all religions which change. That problem lies in making determinations as to the source of those changes, and verifying that changes are directed by God. Twenty-four centuries after Jeremiah set forth his test, many believe that God has seen fit to raise up modern prophets to direct those transformations. Among these believers are a group known as Mormons.

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, often referred to as Mormons, are convinced that Joseph Smith met the ancient test established by Jeremiah, and contend that the only reasonable explanation for his prophetic ability is found in the power and direction with which God has always blessed his prophets. Smith’s followers also claim his ability to call for changes in people and in their relationship with God made manifest his prophetic mantle as a *forth teller*, as much as his predictions had made manifest his role as a *foreteller*.

This claim of divine manifestations in post Biblical times is rejected by long established religions both in specific as well as in general. While earlier religions must deal with new doctrines, and changes in interpretation of past revelations, they deny not only that Joseph Smith received heavenly manifestations, but that after the Bible closed, such manifestations ceased in totality. This paper seeks to examine the fundamental philosophy of later and continuing revelation within the context of the claims of Mormonism.
CHAPTER 1

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS

In 1830 a young man named Joseph Smith organized a new religion in Fayette New York. It was only one of several churches organized during a time of religious revival, but *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, has become something of a social phenomenon. Unlike other contemporary organizations which gradually faded into the background of American sociology, this sect now boasts more than nine million members, the first or second largest religious denomination in nine western states and the fifth largest religious organization in the United States, and the population of the church doubles every ten-twelve years. When Joseph Smith was asked about the tremendous growth of his church, evident even before his death in 1844, he responded that the difference between Mormonism and other churches could be found in its philosophy of authority.

It is true that a claim of divine authority is not peculiar among religionists or those loyal to the exegesis offered by them. In fact, most of the religions in the world claim some kind of divine sanction, but the concept as it was announced by Joseph Smith, created a distinction between Mormons and most other religions. That distinction is highlighted by the claim, made by Smith and his successors, that they possess the same authority from God held by Moses, Abraham, Jeremiah, and others. That same Old Testament authority that was later exhibited by Peter and Paul in the New Testament, and thus Mormon prophets believe this pattern should continue, and that someone today must
be entitled to the same direct revelation from the Lord that those ancient prophets claimed.

A favorite Mormon hymn illustrates this doctrine. Entitled "Joseph's First Prayer," it relates the details of an event which will forever separate Mormonism from other religious denominations.

Suddenly a light descended, brighter far than noonday sun, and a shining glorious pillar, ore him fell around him shone, While appeared two heavenly beings, God the Father and the Son . . . Joseph's humble prayer was answered, and he listened to the Lord. Oh what rapture filled his bosom, for he saw the living God.³

This theophany marks the first of many claims of divine communication from God to Mormon prophets.

To many, more traditional theologians, claims like this border on blasphemy. In the context of traditional Christianity for instance, many scholars believe that new revelation ended with the New Testament apostles and any claims to continued revelation by Smith or his successors are founded in fraud. My thesis will examine this claim from Joseph Smith and determine whether it is philosophically sound. My determination will be based upon the philosophy of revelation as it was established within Judaism, the writings of the traditional scripture of Christianity, and upon the opinions of scholars and
philosophers friendly and hostile to the claims of Joseph Smith. It is necessary from the outset to examine in more detail what the philosophy of Mormonism is as it relates to latter-day revelation, and what it means in the context of this religion.
CHAPTER 2

THE MORMON DOCTRINE OF CONTINUING REVELATION

The position of the latter-day Saint church was summarized by LeGrand Richards, one of the successors to Smith's claim as a "prophet, seer and revelator," at the end of a proselyting mission to the Southern United States in 1937. In this capacity as a successor to Smith's claim, he left behind a pamphlet entitled, "The Message of Mormonism." It was published in 1976 with the following note in the preface. It sets forth clearly that the doctrines to be outlined are intended to be sent forth to the world as official positions of the church:

This outline was prepared to teach the gospel in a systematic and logical manner. It has been used in a number of missions... and by a number of missionaries. Repeated requests and suggestions that it be printed, have influenced the decision to enlarge upon the original outline and have it published in book form. It is here presented...

True to the stated objectives, the opening paragraph presents, in no unclear terminology, the LDS philosophy which provides the foundation of this fundamental Mormon doctrine:
The position of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or Mormon Church, will be discussed from the point of view that it is the only Christian church that does not depend entirely upon the Bible for its teaching. Had all the Bibles in the world been destroyed, the doctrines and teachings of the Church would have been found to conform to Bible teachings, since they were received by direct revelation from God.\textsuperscript{5}

In a nutshell, this is the claim of every Mormon prophet since Joseph Smith, and the origins of this claim are found in the anthem of Sixteenth Century reformers who cried “sola scriptura,” “the Bible only.” Catholic theologies allowed of course that “tradition” was equal almost to the authority of scripture, but neither ever claimed their debate could be settled to a direct appeal to God, and neither expected to receive the revelation from Heaven which could heal the gulf between them.

It is into this gulf that the philosophy of Mormonism steps, but its claim goes further in that it rests upon the Bible itself as a defense for this fundamental philosophy. Mormon prophets appeal to the Bible to prove not only the philosophy that God does continue to speak to men on earth, but that those revelations received must be recorded and taught as God's will.
CHAPTER 3

CRITIQUES

Critics appeal to the same canon of scripture to discount such claims, and thus force the question, "is there Biblical support for Smith's claim to ongoing revelation?" They too point to this doctrine of continued revelation as a separation between Mormonism and conventional Christianity. The Book of Mormon, Pearl of Great Price, and Doctrine and Covenants, accepted by Mormons as scripture equal in authority to the Bible, are offensive to these scholars. The challenges they raise fall into three categories. The first of these challenges are claims that the Bible teaches that revelation is complete within its own pages; the second are charges that "Mormon" revelation is out of harmony with traditional revelation and that these new revelations teach false doctrine. Finally critics point to "new Mormon scripture" as work plagiarized from other sources, not revelation received from God. In an effort to validate the legitimacy of this fundamental doctrine, members of the latter-day Saint Church must deal with these issues.

A first step in the study of these disputes should be an examination of the philosophical foundation upon which these claims are built. One area of common belief between these various parties is that God has communicated with prophets in the past and that the Bible contains a record of his dealings with humankind. The Bible establishes the pattern of revelation in ancient days, and provides a test through which Smith's claim can be examined. The test as set forth by Jeremiah has been noted earlier, and it is in harmony with similar passages throughout the Bible. In this same spirit, but with a
slightly different emphasis the prophet Amos wrote, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing save he revealeth his secrets to his servants the prophets." In this verse Mormons believe God has established a fundamental path for providing elucidation to humankind through all ages. In essence they believe that this is God's Earth, we are his children, and he will continue to pour his inspiration into our hearts and minds, and he will not do anything for us, or which concerns us, without following this protocol. The verse from Amos seems to lend itself in support of that hypothesis, and there are others. In fact the Apostle Paul wrote that apostles and prophets would continue to be a part of God's church until there was a "unity of faith, and all come to the knowledge of the Son of God ..." Knowing that some would still be skeptical of his declaration of these Biblical interpretations, Joseph Smith cited these scriptural teachings and added:

If God has not changed the ordinances and
the priesthood, howl, ye sectarians! If he
has when and where has He revealed it?
Have ye turned revelators? Then why deny
revelation?8

The challenge he issues is to either accept that the Bible declares that revelation will continue or to demonstrate through scripture or revelation that divine disclosures are no more. Though the later is an unrealizable quandary, many scholars have accepted the first challenge. Ed Decker has organized a group called Saints Alive. Their mission is to demonstrate to Mormons the fallacy inherent in underlying Mormon philosophies, like this one, and bring them back to a proper interpretation of the Bible. He writes:
Another point of separation between Mormonism and Christianity is the LDS belief that God has revealed, through His latter-day Prophet, new and more complete scripture . . . The Christian denies the divine origin of these and maintains the Holy Bible to be the only Holy Scripture given by God.¹⁰

The extent of acceptance of this philosophy among Christian denominations was illustrated in a study produced in 1985 by Rex Bennett. He surveyed 18 "Christian" religions in an effort to determine their positions on twenty-three fundamental doctrines. His efforts revealed that while some degree of acceptance of the Bible as communication from God to man existed, only the Mormon church believed that God still played an active role in providing new revelation to his church beyond the teachings recorded in that single volume of Holy Writ.¹¹

In support of their philosophy these anti-Mormon scholars often point to the last book in the Bible, the Book of Revelation, and quote, "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."¹² They note that this commandment comes in the last four verses of accepted scripture, and reason that God makes His feelings on the concept of future revelation perfectly clear. "These new Mormon books of revelation are a clear violation of this commandment, and as such must be discarded on a prima facie level." Mormons have responded to this critique on three levels.
Initially they note the significance of the publication of the books authored by John himself. The Book of Revelation was written in AD 64-96. The Book of John followed its publication. If the interpretation of the final verses of Revelation as accurately described by the statements of Mr. Decker and his group, then John violated his own advice. Second they argue that the "book" in question here is not the Bible because at the time John authored these words the Bible did not exist. Finally, some close scriptural analyses of Old Testament passages reveal that the "book" mentioned here must be the Book of Revelation itself, for several other "books" issue the same warnings, but apply only to the individual books and not the collection of books which we know as the Bible. I will endeavor to expound on these issues one at a time.

The Book of Revelation provides many manifestations which would be considered "curses" to those upon whom they fell. Certainly John includes enough detail so that no one would wish for these events in their lives. It can easily be assumed that these warnings furnish adequate warning to those who read it, but more significantly to John himself. In other words, even if his intent was to warn other people from adding scripture to the Bible, there exists an incredibly good possibility that he himself would observe such a warning. Thus the date of the Book of Revelation becomes key to determining what warning he intended to deliver. In this regard the Reverend J. R. Dummlow, widely acclaimed for his commentary on the Bible, has written:

The state of the churches at the time of this warning (Revelation 2) was such that we should suppose that some considerable time
had elapsed since their foundation. They were infected by heresy and by worldliness. The connection of St. Paul with Ephesus seems to have been a thing of the past, and his martyrdom is, perhaps, referred to in 18: 20. Persecution had been violent, "Rome was drunk with the blood of the saints' (17:6), and fiercer persecution was expected (3:10, 13:7, 15). All this seems to point to a date after the persecution of Nero, 68 AD, and before that of Domitian, 95 A.D....If 11:1 is to be literally understood, the book would have to be dated before the destruction of Jerusalem, 70 A.D....

This exposition provided by the Reverend Dummlow seems to establish that John authored the warning not to add to "this book" between 65 and 95 years following the birth of Jesus Christ. Having established this date, his commentary on the authorship by John of the book which bears his name becomes intriguing. Dummlow notes that no subsequent author quotes the Gospel of John until AD 110. The first to do so is St. Ignatius. Following this reference we have many examples of references made by earlier Christian fathers to John's Gospel. In AD 110 it is quoted again by St. Polycarp, and then in AD 120 by the Gnostic Basilides. Aristides the apologist, circa 130 AD uses expressions characteristic of this text and his contemporary papyrus names John the
author of the gospel at this same date. Additional references to the Gospel of John appear in AD 140, AD 150, AD 160, AD 177, AD 180 and beyond. The ramifications are obvious. Since the book of "St. John" is quoted from regularly after AD 110, but never quoted earlier than that date, it very likely appeared sometime at the end of the first century, after the publication of the Book of Revelation with its warning not to "add" new scripture. Had John intended to warn against any new revelation it is unlikely that he would have disregarded his own words so quickly after having offered them. Another explanation seems necessary.

That explanation is offered by Mormons who point to the words found in Revelation 22:18 and draw comparisons to the words of Moses in Deuteronomy 4:2, and the writing of Solomon in Proverbs 30:6. They note that the Bible is a cumulation of sacred "books" not even published as a single volume until the third century. In fact the word Bible was taken from early Christians who referred to "Ta Biblia" meaning the "Books of Excellence." The warning then is not to add to these individual books, and new Mormon scriptures do not violate that commandment any more than John violated the charge as it was given by Moses.

As I mentioned earlier, Mormons are used to hearing the challenge that the Bible declares the heavens sealed, and they have found answers which seem to satisfy. In fact they will eagerly point to numerous Biblical passages which seem to point to other books of scripture which might have been included in the Bible but are not found therein. Joshua 10:13, for instance, tells of a record known as the Book of Jasher. While some believe this book has been discovered, it is not found within the pages of the Bible. I
Chronicles 29:29 refers to the record of Nathan and Samuel. Again, neither of these books are found in the canon which contains the writings of other prophets of God. All together there are some twenty passages from the Bible which refer to books which seem to be missing from our record of the oracles of God. Mormons reason, "Since these are missing, yet obviously important, the canon of scripture cannot be closed because it is still not complete."

Among these references the ones of most importance to Mormons are those they claim refer to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Ezekiel 37: 15-17 is one such passage. It reads:

The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, 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: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.

As a prophet, carried away captive by the Babylonians around 600 BC, Ezekiel would have been familiar with the system of writing used widely by this people. This writing was made upon wax tablets formed by using wood frames, filling them with hot wax and then allowing the wax to cool. Impressions could then be made thereon. Another
plausible interpretation would be that the sticks refer to rods used in ancient Israel to wrap sacred scrolls around, but whatever the system of record keeping it seems clear that the tribes of Judah were to keep a record, and the tribes of Joseph would keep a record. These records would be instruments in the gathering of the tribes following the forced exodus of Assyria, Babylon and Rome.

While the Bible contains the records of David, Solomon and Jesus Christ, all descendants of Judah, no record of the tribe of Joseph is known. Mormons quickly offer the Book of Mormon as a fulfillment of that prophecy. The Book of Mormon after all, claims to be a history of Lehi and Ishmael descendants of Joseph through the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, who escaped the wrath of Nebuchadnezzar about 600 BC. If one accepts the Latter-day Saints’ interpretation of this passage it becomes a powerful statement in favor of their philosophy that revelation has been extended beyond the covers of the Bible, and thus a theological vacuum is created that few religions outside of Mormonism are prepared to fill. Most non-Mormon theologians therefore reject such an interpretation.

These hierologists believe the "sticks" have no reference to "books," but are "rods" used symbolically as a prophecy that Israel would one day be reunited. Mormons usually fail to see any kind of mutual exclusivity in the two interpretations. In fact they note that Isaiah, Ezekiel, Joel and many other Old Testament prophets often spoke "dualistically," meaning they spoke of more than one thing at a time. Thus they reason that the "sticks" can be both a symbolic representation and a very real record at the same
time. In fact they believe that one of the primary uses for the Book of Mormon is to facilitate that very gathering:

And the Lord said unto Enoch: As I live, even so will I come in the last days . . . And righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare." The Latter-day Saints regard the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, together with the restoration of the Priesthood by the direct ministration of heavenly messengers, as a fulfillment of this prophecy . . . 19

But while Mormons are willing to accept the possibility that the prophecy may refer to more than just the coming forth of a record of Joseph, they also insist that scholars take note that such an interpretation is required as at least part of what Ezekiel wrote. Most scholars seem to agree. In fact, that this is the intent of Ezekiel passage is confirmed by the wording provided by the translators of the New English Bible, "Take one leaf of a wooden writing tablet and write upon it for Judah . . . " Again, such an interpretation leaves the world searching for a record left by those people descended from Joseph, and such a search conforms well to the Latter-day Saints' philosophy of additional revelation.

Another Biblical passage which refers to scripture not known to the world at large is found in the tenth chapter of John. In an effort to teach the inhabitants of Israel that
he is God, and that they must really trust in him for everything that sustains their lives, 
Jesus Christ is recorded as saying, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his 
life for the sheep . . . I am the good shepherd and know my sheep, and am known of 
mine." 20  Israel's very life depended upon the safety of their sheep, physically and 
spiritually. From sheep came food clothes and sacrifices to God. Thus no figure of 
speech brought greater joy to the Israelite than "Jehovah is our Shepherd." 21  In this 
context the Christ continued, "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold, they also 
must hear my voice and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." 22 

Most Christian canonists claim that the Gentiles are this other group of people to 
whom Christ must go, after all, they too depend upon God for all that sustains their lives, 
and they must hear his voice. The problem with that interpretation is that Jesus Christ 
said he would not be preaching to the gentiles, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the 
House of Israel." 23 

Into this vacuum of comprehension Mormon scholars again offer The Book of 
Mormon. The pages of The Book of Mormon detail a visit by Christ to these lost sheep 
of the House of Israel, now living in the new world. To them the Savior says, "Ye are 
they of whom I said, Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring 
and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." 24  The interpretation offered here, that 
these are the people of whom Christ spoke in the Gospel of John is much easier to defend. 
A "fold" is a geographical, not a theoretical distinction. In John we are told of people in 
another geographical region, "sheep not of this fold." Israelites living in a far away land 
would qualify, but gentiles living in the same geographical region would not. Thus
Mormons argue, the Book of Mormon is not "new scripture," but a continuation of the teachings of Jesus Christ given in another place, and as such it must be welcomed into the canon of "the word."

The pages of the Book of Mormon itself addresses the kind of attitude exhibited by skeptics. A passage taken from its pages condemns such objections:

And because my words 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. But thus saith the Lord God: O fools, they shall have a Bible . . . Know ye not that there are more nations than one? Know ye not that I, the Lord your God, have created all men, and that I remember those who are upon the isles of the sea; and that I rule in the heavens above and in the earth beneath; and I bring forth my word unto the children of men, yea, even upon all the nations of the earth? Wherefore murmur ye, because that ye shall receive more of my word? Know ye not that the testimony of two nations is a witness unto you that I am God, that I remember one
nation like unto another? Wherefore, I speak
the same words unto one nation like unto
another. And when the two nations shall
run together the testimony of the two nations
shall run together also. 25

The concept that the Book of Mormon is a second witness of Christ has been emphasized
in recent years by the LDS Church. In fact the official title of the Book of Mormon has
been changed to include the phrase, "Another Testament of Jesus Christ." As with the
philosophy of revelation from God to man, this concept of witnesses is also a part of
Jewish heritage. Jehovah is reported to have given this law through Moses himself, and it
is recorded in Deuteronomy, "At the mouth of two or three witnesses, shall he that is
worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to
death." 26 Although this passage is set in a different context that the one we are now
considering, it was applied by the Jews when bearing all testimony. Paul applies this
standard in this way in writing to the Corinthian saints, "This is the third time I am
coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." 27
If the Bible provides a first witness of God's divinity, the Book of Mormon might be the
second witness, thus fulfilling Jehovah's ancient commandment. This is the tradition of
saints from a previous generation, and it is the contention today of the Latter-day Saints.

If in these passages it seems plausible that God has proved his intent to supply all
generations with revelation from on high, the assumption that, "Mormon" revelations fall
into this category is yet to be demonstrated. Two other objections are often raised which
we have yet to consider. The next type of challenge is more common and more difficult.

As mentioned earlier, the Bible itself establishes a couple of "tests" to be used in making an evaluation of those who claim to receive revelation sent from God. Many Anti-Mormon scholars highlight a second of these tests and assert that much of Mormon revelation fails to meet such a test. "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."\(^28\) After quoting this passage Ed Decker makes this application as it relates to the claim of Joseph Smith to be a prophet of God,

> A true prophet of God cannot utter a single false prophecy, not one! At no time can he give out a "Thus saith the Lord" and have it not come to pass. Joseph Smith gave forth approximately 64 prophecies. Sixty-four times he said, "Thus saith the Lord." If even one single one of these prophecies failed to come to pass, the scriptures call Joseph Smith a false prophet.\(^29\)

While it may be true that Mr. Decker is overstating the Biblical command to predict accurately\(^30\), it is also true that if Joseph Smith made repeated errors in receiving revelation from God his credibility would be seriously undermined. While a complete treatment of each of the 64 prophecies by Joseph Smith would be outside of the amplitude
of this thesis, an analysis of some of those prophecies must be considered here. In issuing a challenge similar to that of Mr. Decker, Jerald and Sandra Tanner (two former members of the LDS church who left its membership in the 1960's and have since begun their own crusade to save Mormons), have written:

Mormon writers state that Joseph Smith's claim to be a prophet is established by the fulfillment of his prophecies. Actually, a careful examination of the evidence seems to prove just the opposite. 31

In issuing this statement the Tanner's provide four examples of "false" prophecy. I will present their imputations here.

The most extensive coverage is relative to a prophecy made by Joseph Smith concerning the start of the United States Civil War. This revelation carries the date of December 25, 1832, and within its pages we find the following:

Verily, thus saith the Lord concerning the wars that will shortly come to pass, beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina, which will eventually terminate in the death and misery of many souls; And the time will come that war will be poured out upon all nations, beginning at this place. For behold, the Southern States shall be divided against
the Northern States, and the Southern States will call on other nations, even the nation of Great Britain, as it is called, and they shall also call upon other nations, in order to defend themselves against other nations; and then war shall be poured out upon all nations. And it shall come to pass, after many days, slaves shall rise up against their masters, who shall be marshaled and disciplined for war. And it shall come to pass also that the remnants who are left of the land will marshal themselves, and shall become exceedingly angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation.32

This revelation is intriguing because while anti-Mormons quote it to show that Joseph Smith was a fraud, Mormons believe it proves that their founder was a true prophet of God. Applying the standard that revelations which come through a prophet of God should be fulfilled, this certainly seems to be a remarkable attestation of Smith's claim. Three decades before the first shots fired on Fort Sumpter, Joseph Smith predicts the rebellion of the Southern United States, accurately foretells the specific state which will succeed first, details the aid Great Britain will offer the seceding states, notes the eventual entanglement of nations throughout the world in the conflict, and details the rebellion of
black slaves against their masters. However, the Tanners continue beyond the obvious with this quotation from another disbeliever named Larry Jonas,

On July 14, 1832, Congress passed a tariff act which South Carolina thought so bad, she declared the tariff null and void. President Andrew Jackson alerted the nation's troops. At the time Smith made his prophecy the nation expected a war between North and South to begin at the rebellion of South Carolina. This can be confirmed in a U.S. history book... Far from being evidences of Smith's divine calling, the most famous prophecies which he made are evidences that he can copy views of his time.33

While these authors make a compelling argument, one fact more must be entered into the record in an effort to determine the accuracy of such statements. Mr. Jonas suggests that the events which precipitated the Civil War can be found in a history book, and indeed the can. Taken from such a book, these details seem relevant: first; although war seemed eminent in 1832, political compromise succeeded in diverting such fears for almost thirty years; second, the results of such compromises were effective in convincing the nation that war would be averted permanently; third, the event which finally precipitated the war was the election of Abraham Lincoln who, in 1832, was an unknown from the backwoods
of the western frontier (certainly not an individual anyone could have foreseen). With this in mind, the prophecy that becomes relevant when trying to assess Smith's prediction is not dated 1832, rather it is dated April 12, 1843.

Long after the crisis mentioned above, long after political pundits had ceased their concern over a civil war, Joseph Smith wrote, "I prophecy in the name of the Lord God, that the commencement of the difficulties which will cause much bloodshed ... will be in South Carolina. It will probably arise through the slave question." Much as he had said in 1832, when the whole world believed it, he now prophesied in 1843 when no one believed or even cared. The evidence seems to point to either a rather remarkable persistence or a genuine revelation brought forth through Joseph Smith.

Still, if the whole revelation is not a fraud, his critics point to particular passages of the 1832 statement which they feel demonstrate a false prophecy. Specifically, they note that war was not, "poured out on all nations." But consider this quotation from a strictly sectarian review of United States history:

The brutalizing effect of the war on American society lasted for decades ... The methods of struggle left a legacy of vigilantism, outlawry, and night riding. Lynch-mob violence became much more common after 1865. Family feuds in the Appalachian Mountains had theirs origins in the raids of rival guerrilla bands, as did similar quarrels in Texas and the Southwest.
The war also reinforced the materialism of American society, since the importance of business and manufacturing to the Union victory had been clear to everyone. Corruption and insensitivity suffused the following years as Americans abandoned themselves wholeheartedly to a race for personal gain. The scope of the disaster still resists our full comprehension.35

Even Mormon apologists admit that they would like to see the fulfillment of this phrase in much more concrete terms, but they are willing simply to note that the Civil War taught sad lessons applied long after Appamadix. The elements of that war which became apparent in American behavior afterwards are evident to the writers of history and we need not search too hard to see the same attitudes which have spread to causes like the Irish Republican Army, the Palestinian Liberation Organization and more. The materialism evident in Americans' Industrial revolution which followed the Civil War also spread across oceans causing much of the poverty and resulting class warfare which we still hear about on the evening news. This fulfillment of Smith's words requires effort which will fall on the deaf ears of Anti-Mormon scholars, but Mormons reason that just as Isaiah and Revelation are books of prophecies which require much abstract deliberation, the ultimate realization of these words may require a conceptual understanding. In any event the whole of the prediction seems weighted in favor of
Smith's claims rather than against him. At least the possibility is sufficient to continue the
debate.

Other charges of false prophecy include a prediction that a temple would be built
in Missouri and that money would be found for the church by selling The Book of
Mormon in Canada. Concerning the first of these charges Mormons simply reply that a
revelation to be fulfilled in the future is still a true revelation. In regard to the second they
laugh and continue to accept the envy of the world as it notes the wealth of the church
they call their own.

The specifics of this revelation were that some of the missionaries for the church
should go to Canada to sell copies of the Book of Mormon and thus help the church out
of its early financial abyss. Joseph predicted great success, but they returned in utter
failure. Even Joseph believed that his prophecy had been from the devil, but years later
the same anti-Mormon scholars who call this false prophecy note, "Today the LDS
Church is a religious and financial empire with . . . assets in the billions of dollars and
income in contributions and sales by church-controlled corporations estimated at more
than $3 million a day . . ."[36] But how much of that wealth can be traced to those early
missionaries in Canada and thus fulfillment of Smith's prophecy? Here are the facts.
While most of the membership of the LDS church lives within the United States of
America, the membership from Canada is second. More significantly Brigham Young,
the second "prophet, seer, and revelator" and the man who established this empire in the
Rocky Mountains was converted by these missionaries sent to Canada. It is a fair
criticism of Joseph's ability as a prophet to note that such abstraction was beyond his
understanding of the prophecy in question. It is also fair to note that sometimes even the mouthpiece of God may not understand how his words will be fulfilled. Mormons claim that what Joseph Smith was taught here was that if you speak for the Almighty His words will be fulfilled.

A final attack on the prophetic ability of Joseph Smith is a prediction of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Many of the churches organized at the same time Smith organized his church made the return of the Savior a prominent focus of their ministry. In that context Smith records, "I was praying very earnestly to know the time of the coming of the Son of Man, when I heard a voice repeat the following: Joseph, my son, if thou livest until thou art eighty-five years old, thou shalt see the face of the Son of Man . . ." Had Jesus Christ appeared in fulfillment of this revelation the date would have been 1890. The Tanners note that no apocalypse occurred and offer the event as an example of a false prophecy. What they do not mention is that the conditions of the prophecy were not met, i.e., Joseph Smith was murdered at 44 years of age, and though even many of the leaders of Mormonism may have believed the heralded return of the Son of God would take place in spite that factor, the events of history have told another story.

Another element that eludes such critical discussion is the words of Jesus Christ two thousand years ago when asked the same question. Matthew records the inquiry of the disciples, "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming . . ." Although he gives them signs to look for he concludes by telling them, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Today leaders of the Mormon church are quick to teach that the Second Coming
of Jesus Christ is not now, nor will it ever be, a matter to be revealed to mankind. It is
designed to keep us forever looking, forever preparing, until the moment arrives. When
Joseph Smith asks the question, the Lord teaches that same principal. God of course
knew that death would close his prophet's eyes long before the age of eighty-five, hence
the conclusion of the revelation to Smith (not quoted in anti-Mormon literature), ". . .
therefore let this suffice, and trouble me no more on this matter." The real revelation to
Smith was that God did not want to give an answer to the question. Thus Smith himself
concludes, "I was left thus, without being able to decide whether this coming referred to
the beginning of the millennium . . . or whether I would die and thus see his face."39 This
event certainly fails to prove any kind of divine insight, but it also fails as an attempt to
discredit Smith as a predictor of future events.

Only the number of pages available here limits further discussion of the
revelations declared through Joseph Smith. Scholars on both sides of the philosophical
fence have written volumes on the subject. One LDS scholar claims more than four
hundred of Smith's prophecies have been fulfilled. Included therein are the words of an
angel sent to tell Smith, "Your name should be had for good and evil among all nations,
kindred, and tongues . . ."40 Perhaps on this one prediction even his enemies will grant
fulfillment. Beyond that, continued reflection may only serve to elucidate the thought
attributed to Napoleon Bonaparte, "What is history but a fable agreed upon?" No doubt,
Mormons will agree Smith's prophetic ability proved, enemies of his philosophy will
agree to reject any such claims. If then a determination of such things must be left to
God and his prophets, perhaps a discussion of doctrine will provide more edification.
More Critical Views: The Doctrine

Prophets, whose predictions found place within the pages of the Bible, are held to another standard set forth therein:

If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shall not hearken unto the words of that prophet . . . for the Lord your God proveth you . . . Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him . . . "

This standard provided ancient Israel with yet another level of protection from false prophets. As discussed to this point, their prophets had to be accurate in foretelling the future, but this alone was not sufficient to claim the title. God's prophets must be prepared to do more. The real test becomes one of declaration of doctrine, and the most important doctrine is the nature of God.

Again anti-mormon scholars declare that Joseph Smith failed this test. Repeatedly their attacks contain the phrase, "he taught the wrong Jesus." Mormons themselves are often confused by such censure. The Book of Mormon declares with boldness, "We talk
of Christ, we preach of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we prophecy of Christ. . ."42 Still the attacks come.

In truth, the theology taught by Joseph Smith does vary substantially from that of traditional Christianity on this key promulgation. The Nicene Creed provided the first formal declaration of the nature of God, and this tenet has now been accepted by virtually all Christian denominations for centuries. A central principle contained therein declares that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost are one: Three manifestations; one individual. In Joseph Smith's first declaration as prolocutor for God he is told that such doctrine is, "wrong. . . an abomination in his sight. . . the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. . ."43 The doctrine of God as sent forth by Joseph Smith is that these three, are three; one in purpose and unity granted, but separate people. Applying the test that a prophet of God must teach the same doctrine of God that former prophets have taught it should be a simple task to determine if Smith is in fact the fraud some claim.

The germane verse of scripture most often quoted by sapient scholars of scripture is found in The Gospel of St. John, "I and my Father are one."44 To those who speak English no statement could be offered that would be clearer or more final in its pronouncement. The difficulty is that the New Testament writers did not speak English, neither did they write the language. The earliest copies of this text are written in Greek, and that language is anything but clear on this point of doctrine.

The word used here, heis, has no less than eight possible translations.

◆ One in contrast to many metaphorically, union and concord emphatically,
♦ one to the exclusion of others
♦ one, alone
♦ one and the same
♦ a certain one, in the same since as the indefinite pronoun *tis*
♦ distributively, with hekastos, i.e., every one
♦ the ordinal number, equivalent to protos, "the first"\(^{45}\)

The authors and supporters of the Nicene Creed tend toward the first of these interpretations, but the more likely reading is given by W. E. Vine in his well respected lexicon as a metaphor to illustrate harmony of purpose\(^{46}\).

In support of this interpretation, these theorist turn to the seventeenth of John's Gospel. Here Jesus Christ is praying for the twelve apostles, "I pray for them . . . that they may be one, as we are. . . That they may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also might be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

The Greek is the same here as in the tenth, but no theologians of whom I am aware claim that the twelve here are to become one "person" with God. Such a philosophy is common among Hindus and those religions of the East, but within the Judeao-Christian world view such thoughts are not affirmed.

The more likely rendition here is that unity is vital, and Christ prays that they might become unified with the kind of total harmony that is exhibited between God the Father and His Son. In fact Mormons quickly point out that the very nature of the event is a testimonial that the Father and the Son are not one entity. After all, Jesus is not teaching the twelve to pray here, he is praying for them. But if he is the Father, now in
Heaven, to whom is he praying? The most logical interpretation is that the two are physically separate but ethereally conjoined.

This last representation is further illustrated by a series of events where the physical separation of the Father and the Son seems clearly manifest. Beginning in the book of Genesis, Adam and Eve are cast out from the presence of God the Father, but in the next they are again talking to God. The Hebrew text notes the change from "Elohim" to "Jehovah" allowing a distinction between the two.\textsuperscript{47} Again the Gospel of John records a voice from heaven coming at the request of Jesus that God glorify his own name, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." Jesus turns to those who stood by him, and who had heard the voice, "This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes."\textsuperscript{48} While Jesus offers no explanation beyond those words, but it takes no great reasoning to determine that among the things understood by those who were there present, they would have thought that the voice they heard belonged to someone other that Jesus Christ. If that separate person was God, as Christ implies, then they are separate people.

Similar events take place at the baptism of the Savior\textsuperscript{49} and at the martyrdom of Stephen who testified with his dying breath, "... behold I see the heavens opened, and the son of man standing on the right hand of God."\textsuperscript{50} Some scholars have explained what might have been meant in each of these scenes, but the indisputable fact is that those who were witness to these events would have been left with the clear impression that God the Father and God the Son were two distinct individuals. Assuming that God is a great teacher, such a failure to instruct accurately this doctrine so central to his mission, is unfathomable.
The passage which seems most compelling is however found in the Gospel of St.
John. It records an attempt to discredit Jesus of Nazareth as the long awaited Messiah.
The attempt being made by the Pharisees who challenge him, "Thou bearest record of
thyself; thy record is not true." Earlier I discussed the Law of Witnesses handed down
from God to Moses. It is this tradition to which the Pharisees now refer. They challenge
Jesus to provide a second witness to his claim, and he does, "I am not alone, but I and my
Father that sent me. It is written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am
one that bears witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me." If
Jesus and God are the same, his testimony is not only invalid, but a fraud, and such deceit
is not on any Christian scholar's list of qualities of the Savior. If his testimony is valid,
we must assume that he and his Father are two separate people and for only as such could
they fulfill the Law of witnesses.

Mormons claim that God's primary purpose in calling Joseph Smith to be a
prophet was not to predict the future, but to correct the past. Of the roles a prophet plays
within Mormonism this is the central purpose. The need for Joseph Smith then, was not
to add to an already impressive list of future predictions left concerning the second
coming of Christ, but to correct the doctrine of who he is and what it means to follow
him. While the scope of this paper forbids the complete discussion warranted on this
issue, it seems lucid to reason that, at least in this point of doctrine, Smith served that
function well.

Latter-Day Saints accept that their prophets may make mistakes, they are after all
human, still learning, and sometimes still learning to be led by God. And the pattern
supplied by ancient oracles of God certainly allow room for humanity. After all Lot moved to Sodom, and Jacob practiced folk-magic, even Nathan commanded David to build a temple contrary to the commandment of God. Still, they fundamentally believe that God will not allow the church to be led astray by a prophet. The doctrine that they teach must be pure, even if the predictions or the attitudes need to be corrected from time to time. It was this dogma that Wilford Woodruff, the forth man to lead the church as its prophet, had in mind when he wrote, "The Lord will never permit me or any man who stands at the head of this church to lead you astray. It is not in the program. It is not in the mind of God. If I were to attempt that, the Lord would remove me from out of my place, and so he will any other man who attempts to lead the children of men astray..."

**Criticism Continued: The History**

Finally we come to the question of authorship. Mormons argue that Joseph Smith could not have produced the Book of Mormon by himself. They reason that the utter amplitude of the project would have been too much for this young man who never finished the forth grade, and thus the sheer existence of the Book of Mormon becomes a testimonial to God's aid in bringing the book to light. In reply many writers have simply charged Smith with plagiarism.

Our study has led us to the conclusion that

the Book of Mormon is not an ancient or
divinely-inspired record, but rather a product of
the nineteenth century.
These critics claim that most of the pages of the Book of Mormon have come from a novel by Solomon Spalding, another by Ethan Smith, and finally the Bible itself. While many have expressed the belief that Smith copied all of his information from one or another of these sources, the most recent claims involve a borrowing from them all.

Some writers have argued that Joseph Smith plagiarized most of the Book of Mormon from a novel by Solomon Spaulding, along with passages of the Bible. While in this writers opinion there are serious problems with this theory as a complete explanation of the book's origin, it is plausible that Joseph Smith...produced the book by combining ideas from various sources with his own imagination and some plagiarism from the Bible and other sources. This is a more complicated theory, but it is able to account for the totality of the Book of Mormon in a way that simpler theories cannot.35

The evidence for these charges is found in lists of parallels between the Book of Mormon narrative and these other sources. As explained by one Mormon apologist:

...if anyone were to argue that the Book of Mormon was obviously stolen from Solomon Spaulding's Manuscript Story because the word "and" is
found to appear frequently in both texts, we would simply laugh at him. If he brought forth as evidence the fact that kings are mentioned in both books, he might not appear so ridiculous. But if the Manuscript Story actually referred to "cureloms and cumons" (terms used in the Book of Mormon) we would be quite sure of a possible borrowing. The hypothetical case illustrates the fact that there are degrees of significance in parallels.⁵⁶

The key then is to draw parallels between what is written in the Book of Mormon and other "source" materials. It is imperative to find something unique and particular to lend credibility and significance to the parallels.

Several years ago a man named James Bales compiled a typical and well circulated list of seventy-five parallels between the Book of Mormon and the Manuscript Story. His determination was that seventy-five parallels provided too much evidence to be considered a coincidence, and claimed that Joseph Smith must have stolen his work from that of Solomon Spaulding. Mormons have countered that most of these parallels are as spurious as the use of "and" mentioned in the earlier explanation.

As an actual example, to prove that the Book of Mormon and the manuscript Story are related, this investigator shrewdly notes that in both books "men arise and make
addresses." Both books pronounce "woe unto the wicked mortals," "both mention milk,"
in both "adultery was a crime" "both had councilors,"
and so on. What kind of parallels are these?
Seventy-five or seven hundred and fifty, it is
the same-such stuff adds up to nothing.57

Not all charges are as insignificant however. In 1946 Fawn Brodie published a volume
titled, "No Man Knows My History" which included a list of parallels between Ethan
Smith's, View of the Hebrews and the Book of Mormon. What made this list so
damaging is that it was not compiled by an enemy of Mormonism on a mission to
discredit Joseph Smith, but by a Mormon apostle named B. H. Roberts.

Mrs. Brodie made use of the list to note the similarity in the fundamental
conjecture these two works. Both built upon common knowledge that the inhabitants of
America before the Europeans arrived were primitive by western standards, but ruins of
civilizations testified that their ancestors had been highly advanced. The assumption of
many in the nineteenth century was that the lost tribes of Israel had come to America,
gradually fell into idleness, and civilization died off leaving only a remnant of their
former refinement behind. Mrs. Brodie then begins to display intricate parallels.

Building on the base of nineteenth century opinion, Ethan Smith makes seven
speculations which Mrs. Brodie believed were copied into Joseph Smith's Book of
Mormon. When the civilized ten tribes arrived in the New World, they found themselves
in a wilderness teaming with game, (1) "inviting them to the chase"; most of them (2) fell
into a lifestyle of the wandering nomadic, hunting, while the more sensible part of the people continued in more civilized ways. It is highly probable, Ethan Smith continues, "that the more sensible part become wholly separate from the hunting and savage tribes of their brethren", that the latter (4) lost the knowledge of having descended from the same family, that (5) tremendous wars were frequent between them and their savage brethren. Then gradually (6) their savage jealousies and rage annihilated their more civilized brethren. He wrote that, "We cannot so well account for their evident degeneracy in any way except the Bible way: as that it took place under a vindictive Providence to accomplish divine judgments denounced against the idolatrous ten tribes of Israel."

To someone with a casual knowledge of the Book of Mormon the story line will sound remarkably familiar, but let us consider these points more closely. The Book of Mormon is an account of Israelites who come to America and separate into two groups. The more wicked, nomadic tribes became known as Lamanites, the more righteous, more stable nation was known as Nephites. However, (1) It was not the "chase" that led the Laminates to the wild ways, but their choice to serve Satan rather than God, and (2) While most of the ruins were left behind by the Nephites there are several periods of repentance when the Lamanites begin to build great cities as well. During these periods of time the separation between the groups was obliviated, and in fact the Book of Mormon refers to one period of unity when their were no "-ites among them". Meaning there was no separation of any kind. (4) Far from loosing the identity of who they were the Lamanites are constantly being reminded that they are brothers with the Nephites, and it is this reminder that fuels the hatred, and that causes the savage warfare, but such
savagery was not always on the part of the Lamanites for at times the Nephites became much more wicked and savage than their brethren. The Book of Mormon does end with (6) the annihilation of the Nephites, but the doctrine presented by this story is wholly removed from the conclusions drawn by Ethan Smith. It is not the savagery of the Lamanites which fulfills the prophecies about the ten tribes (that would be the Nephites); their degeneracy is given a unique explanation not found in either Ethan Smith or the Bible.

Mormons have learned to respond to charges that Joseph Smith was a fraud and a plagiarist. Their answers can even be compelling, but they have not learned to hide the disgust they feel at fielding the same challenges year after year. Again the Mormon apologist Hugh Nibley has written:

Any conscientious student likes to find support for his own theories and ideas in the writings of others, and when he comes upon a particularly helpful or enlightening passage joyfully quotes it. Yet if Joseph Smith says there was once a great civilization in Central America, and quotes Josiah Stout to back him up, it is plain that Smith is stealing from Stout.59

Men like Hugh Nibley have come to the defense of the man they believe to be a prophet of God in the manner illustrated above. They grant that parallels exist, but argue that
such parallels prove nothing. The reasoning is complex and requires time to understand completely. Simpler responses are often heard which require much less effort. Chiefly, Mormons note that Joseph Smith had no formal education beyond the third grade. The odds that this young man, who lived on the frontier, had time or knowledge to read these books is rather diminutive. When combined with the large number of unique concepts presented by The Book of Mormon such odds are less than believable.
CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions I have drawn will undoubtedly reveal my own prejudice in the matter of this thesis. Certainly their are others who will read these words and draw considerably different conclusion. I suppose the final pages of this discussion will not be written for years, such is the nature of philosophy and religion. James A. Froude has written, "Philosophy goes no further than probabilities, and in every assertion keeps a doubt in reserve," and in this matter he may be accurate. Still I am left with one last thought, taken from the pages of Jewish tradition as it relates to new revelation from God.

The Aggadata is a compilation of the Talmud's nonlegal discussions. Among these discussions is one particularly well known passage found in the Talmudic traculate Bava Mezia 59b. The Aggadata follows a discussion in which the rabbis debate whether an oven that had become impure could be made pure. Most of the rabbis decide that the answer is no, but Rabbi Eliezer disagreed:

On that day, Rabbi Eliezer put forward all the arguments in the world, but the sages did not accept them. Finally he said to them, 'If the halakha is according to me, let that carob-tree prove it.'

He pointed to a nearby carob-tree, which then moved from its place a hundred cubits...
Most people would be inclined in this setting to note the miracle as evidence from God that Rabbi Eliezer spoke correctly. In the context of this paper it could be considered a sign that he had received light and truth from Heaven itself. But the emphasis among modern religionists is the written word, and in that context the world denies such revelation.

They say to him, 'One can not bring a proof from the moving of a carob-tree.' Said Rabbi Eliezer, 'If the halakha is according to me, may that stream of water prove it.' The stream of water then turned in the opposite direction. They said to him, 'One can not bring a proof from the behavior of a stream of water.'

Again, most people would accept the miracle as a sign of prophecy and power from God, but such is not the case in this Aggadata. The debate continues back and forth. Rabbi Eliezer seeks a sign in the form of the walls of the study moving. Still the others deny the possibility. Finally he seeks testimony in the form of a spoken revelation from God himself:

Then said Rabbi Eliezer, 'If the halakha is according to me, may a proof come from Heaven.' Then a heavenly voice went forth and said, 'What have you to do with Rabbi Eliezer? The halakha is according to him in every
place.' Then Rabbi Joshua rose up to his feet, and said, 'It is not in the heavens.'

The last line is a reference to the Torah (Deuteronomy 30:12) and its meaning is particularly germane at the conclusion of this thesis. He meant that since the Torah provided an answer to the question already, we need not pay attention to heavenly voices. Thus the nation of Israel, ignoring their tradition of heavenly manifestations, have become a people content to argue the law.

That this anecdote is viewed by most, even Jewish scholars as a myth further illustrates the change in philosophy from ancient Judea-Christian belief in divine manifestations to our societies denial of their possibility. Mormons argue that Christianity has responded to modern revelation in exactly the same fashion as the Jews, and while some exceptions may exist most Christian scholars would agree. Thus Mormons witness that God called Joseph Smith to reestablish the connection once more. Such a philosophy is not therefore a break with the past, but a restoration of God’s relationship with his children. It is true, they reason that the Bible has been given us from God, but it hasn’t answered all our questions. If it had we would not know war or hate, poverty or fear. All of these sad elements of society continue with us because the Bible is insufficient, and thus we certainly need His guiding light. It can not be that God has lost his ability to reveal himself to man, for that is not the character of God. It can not be that
we are less loved than those generations whose prophets heard the voice of God. If then
God can speak, he loves us enough to want to speak, and we need him enough to
listen-then to ignore revelations which come to modern prophets may be as senseless as
Rabbi Joshua.
NOTES

1 The Holy Bible trans. King James, (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church Of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1979) 980; Jeremiah 28:9.

2 D. Michael Quinn, The Mormon Hierarchy (Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, 1979) ix.

3 Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1985) 26.

4 LeGrand Richards, A Marvelous Work and a Wonder (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1979) xi.

5 Richards 1.

6 The Holy Bible 1139; Amos 3:7.

7 The Holy Bible 1484; Ephesians 4:11-13.

8 Joseph Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1976) 308.

9 If revelation from God has ceased, it would be impossible to receive a revelation declaring such cessation.

10 Ed Decker, To Moroni With Love (Seattle, Washington: Life Messengers 1985) 17.


12 The Holy Bible 1589; Revelation 22:18.


14 Dummlow 770.
15 Dummlow xi.
Messervy uses as his sources archeological discoveries made by San Nicole, and more recently by Max Mallowan in the Mid-Eastern city of Nimrod.
17 *The Book of Mormon* trans. Joseph Smith Jr. (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints 1981) 12; 1 Nephi 5:11,
19 James Talmage, *The Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book) 324.
22 *The Holy Bible* 1345; John 10: 16.
23 *The Holy Bible* 1214; Matthew 15:24
26 *The Holy Bible* 279; Deuteronomy 16:6.
27 *The Holy Bible* 1472; 2 Corinthians 13:1.
28 *The Holy Bible* 282; Deuteronomy 18:20.
29 Tope 29-30.
30 This particular passage indicates that a man may be called of God, but through pride begin to offer insights which are not of God. This is presumption, and even worthy
of the death of the prophet, but does not indicate the man was not a true prophet of God when called.


32 The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints 1981) 150; Section 87: 1-5.

33 Tanner 425.


36 Tanner 21-22.

37 The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints section 130: 14-15.

38 The Holy Bible 1231, Matthew 24: 3 & 36.

39 The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints section 130: 14-15.

40 The Pearl of Great Price (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1981) Joseph Smith History 19.

41 The Holy Bible 275; Deuteronomy 13:1.

43 *The Pearl of Great Price* Joseph Smith History 19.

44 *The Holy Bible* 1345; John 10:30.


46 Vine 819.

47 *The Holy Bible* 4-8; Genesis 3-4.


49 *The Holy Bible* 119; Matthew 3: 13-17.

50 *The Holy Bible* 1376; Acts 7: 55-56.

51 *The Holy Bible* 1341; John 8: 13-18.

52 *The Holy Bible* 1-3; Genesis 1

53 *The Holy Bible* 45-47; Genesis 30.

54 *The Holy Bible* 435; 2 Samuel 7: 3.


57 Nibley 193


59 Nibley 202.

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Christian Apologetic Works


**General Religious Texts**


