

MORMONISM

Overview: Mormonism begins with Joseph Smith who begins a new church in 1830. But, according to Joseph Smith the revelations he received from God came much earlier starting approximately 1820, when he was either 14 or 15, depending upon which version of his story you hear, and slowly being unveiled until he starts his own church. It is said that God guided him to this latter day revelation as a fulfillment of Ezekiel 38:16-17, that the *Book of Mormon* is the second stick and the Bible is the first stick. One of the great problems of the writings of Joseph Smith is the many alterations and changes that have occurred in less than two centuries. Some estimate as many as 3,000 changes have been made to the *Book of Mormon* alone.

History:

Early History of the Mormon Church

1805 Joseph Smith, is born in Sharon, Vermont

1820 Joseph Smith went into the woods to pray concerning which church to join. He had his First Vision of God the Father and Jesus who appeared to him and told him not to join any of the denominational churches. (**Pearl of Great Price**, Joseph Smith 2:3 & 17-19). *other dates given with a different versions of the vision 1832, 1835, 1840, 1842, 1855, and 1879).*

1823 Sept. 21 An angel called Moroni, a resurrected being who is supposed to be the son of Mormon who was the leader of the Nephites who had previously lived in the Americas. Moroni directed Smith to the hill Cumorah in upstate NY. He could dig and find these golden tablets (plates) which was written in reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics a sacred record of the people who lived on the American continent prior to the time of the Indians. Joseph examined the plates once a year until 1827.

1826 March, He was found guilty of the misdemeanor of "glass looking" by Justice Albert Neely (claimed to find treasures and lost property by looking into a hat containing seer stones)

1827 Sept. 22, Angel Moroni gives Smith the Golden Plates and instructs him on how to begin the translation process which will later become the **Book of Mormon** .

1828 June; Joseph Smith joined the Methodist church but was given an ultimatum of either withdrawing his name or standing an investigation. He withdrew his name. "We (members of the church) thought it was a disgrace to the church to have a practicing necromancer, a dealer in enchantments and bleeding ghosts, in it." (*The Anboy Journal* p. 1 June 11, 1879)

Question? Why Did Smith try to join this church after he already received the revelation that they were all abominable? "I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all *wrong*; and the Personage who addressed me said that all *their creeds were* and abomination in *his sight*, that those professors were all *corrupt....* (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith--History 1:19, Page 49) Wouldn't this be considered disobedience and even joining what he called the apostates.

1829 Smith finishes translation of the Golden Plates, publishes **Book of Mormon**. (Smith did this by looking into a hat with a seer stone "peepstones", prior to using this method of translating the book of Mormon He would place his face into the hat and see visions of buried treasure, lost property, of which he was formerly convicted of glass looking.)

1829 "After the completion of the translation of the **Book of Mormon** in 1829, the angel (Moroni) again appeared to Joseph Smith and received back the plates into his keeping," (*Essentials In Church History*, Joseph Fielding Smith, p. 68).

1829 May, John the Baptist allegedly conferred the priesthood of Aaron upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdrey.

And baptized Smith to accomplish the restoring the true church by preaching the true restored gospel which, had been lost from the earth.

1829 Peter, James, and John, appeared and conferred the priesthood of Melchizedek upon Joseph Smith and Oliver

Cowdrey. D and C 7. says "John the beloved shall live until hard at the Lord's work bringing souls to Christ." the Lord comes. According to Mormon teachings, four apostles are to stay alive until Jesus second coming. History shows they all died. Many Mormon leaders still claim they have received spiritistic contacts from their dead "masters" Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, other church presidents (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol., p. 369; Vol. 7, p. 240; Crowther, op. cit., p. 60)

1830 April 6, Joseph Smith, Jr. founded the church called the Church of Christ. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, David Whitmer, p. 73)

1830 March, first publication of the Book of Mormon.

1831 Moves to Kirtland, OH., Temple was commenced to be built on March, 27, 1836.

1833 Smiths First 65 revelations are printed in Book of Commandments.

1834 Why did Smith change the Name of the Church after God already told him 4 years before what to name it? "In June, 1829, the Lord gave us the name by which we must call the church, being the same as He gave the Nephites. We obeyed His commandment, and called it The Church of Christ until 1834, when, through the influence of Sydney Rigdon, the name of the church was changed to The Church of the Latter Day Saints, dropping out the name of Christ entirely..." (An Address to All Believers In Christ Witmer, p. 73). Now to be called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS).

1834 New First Vision information on Joseph Smith's age. "I shall, therefore, pass over that, till I come to the 15th year of his life," (Vol. 1, *Messenger and Advocate*, Dec. 1834, p. 42)

1844 June 27, mob attacks jail in Carthage, Ill., Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum are killed. Smith was smuggled in a pistol and he defended himself. During the attack, Joseph Smith killed two men and wounded a third with a small pistol he had smuggled into him. (History of the Church, Vol. 7, p. 103). Hardly a martyr as they describe him.

Brigham Young was a member of the church's Council of Twelve Apostles. When Smith was killed, Young succeeded him as leader of the church.

1844 Several splinter groups break off from main group in Nauvoo during the next few years (Divergent Paths of the Restoration).

1846 In February Brigham Young lead the Mormons out of Nauvoo, IL, choosing the site which is now Salt Lake City.

1847 July 24, Mormons arrived in Salt Lake City.

1847 Brigham Young officially becomes the second prophet of the LDS Church. (Deseret News Church Almanac, 19n, p. 92).

1852 Brigham Young teaches Adam-God doctrine. "When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him. He helped to make and organize this world. He is Michael the Archangel the Ancient of Days! About whom holy men have written and spoken -- He is our Father and our God, and the only God with whom we have to do." (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 1, p. 50).

1855 Doctrine & Covenants, Brigham Young preaches in a sermon. "Now if any of you will deny the plurality of wives, and continue to do so, I promise that you will be damned." (Journal of Discourses vol.3 p.266) (Deseret News, Nov. 14, 1855).

1861 Brigham Young said, "Some years ago (9 to be exact) I advanced a doctrine with regard to Adam being our Father and God. That will be a curse to many of the elders of Israel because of their folly with regard to it. They yet grovel in darkness and will. It is one of the most glorious revealments of the economy of heaven. Yet the world holds it in derision." (*Manuscript Addresses of Brigham Young*, Oct 8, 1861).²

Views of God:

Joseph Smith, "God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man.... I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea and take away the veil, so that you may see. ...He was once a man like us; yea, that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ Himself did..." (History of the Church, Vol. 6, p. 305-306).

"First God himself, who sits enthroned in yonder heavens, is a man unto one of yourselves, that is the great secret." (J.Smith jr. Times and seasons vol.5 p.613 Aug.15 1844)

Apostle McConkie stated "God is an exalted man, perfected, enthroned, and supreme." (Mormon doctrine,p.250)

"First, we believe that God is a being with a body in form like man's; that he possesses body, parts and passions; that in a word, God is an exalted, perfected man" {Roberts conference of the Mutual Improvement Associations of the Salt Lake Stake of Zion, August 18,1901 published in both the Deseret News and the Improvement Era}

As man is, god once was; as God is, man may become."(Mormon Prophet Lorenzo Snow quoted in LDS Church News, Jan. 16, 1983, p. 14)

"Adam was an immortal being when he came to this earth. He had lived on an earth similar to ours. He had received the priesthood and the keys thereof, and had been faithful in all things, and had gained his resurrection, and his exaltation and was crowned with glory, immortality and eternal lives, and was numbered with the Gods, for such he became through his faithfulness. (Brigham Young quoted in the Journal of L. John Nuttall, Feb 7, 1887)

Views of Scripture:

They believe that Ezekiel 38:15-17 teaches that there would be two different books, the *Bible* and *Book of Mormon*, used by God to unite His believers in truth. They believe the two together bring the full revelation of God.

Works Consulted

1 Nummela, Tom: Editor, One God Many Gods, St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House,

1998

2 "History of The Mormon Church", <http://www.letusreason.org/LDS12.htm>

3 Various Articles on History and Teachings, <http://www.lds.org>