

" . . . Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error"

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AN APPRAISAL OF KARL BARTH'S RECENT VISIT

Prof. John E. Dahlin, Editor

Recently Switzerland's leading theologian, Karl Barth, came to the United States for a lecture series at the University of Chicago and at Princeton Theological Seminary. This visit came upon his retirement from a long professorship at the University of Basel, Switzerland. Strange as this may appear to some, actually this was his first visit to our country. At the age of 75 he commands much strength and influence as a theologian. About 2,000 people crowded into Chicago's Rockefeller Memorial Chapel at each lecture, and 2,200 filled the Princeton University Chapel. A wide interest in theological circles was stirred up by the lecture series of Karl Barth. For many Americans it was their first encounter with a man who has done much to shape the theological climate of present-day Europe. Many perhaps were surprised at his incessant pipe-smoking habit as invariably he was seen pulling on a meerscham pipe. His lectures introduced his personality to the United States, and this in turn may lead to a new wave of Barthianism. In fact, ministers from all over the country flocked to Chicago and to Princeton to hear the famous Swiss-German theologian who has become internationally known for his voluminous writings in the theological sphere. Since 1932 he has concentrated his ma-

jor work at Basel, Switzerland.

BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

As an individualist there was no room found for him in Nazi Germany. His economic and social views were out of harmony with the nationalistic regime which gained control over Germany during the rise of Adolf Hitler. As one checks on Barth's non-theological concepts, it is evident that earlier in his life he was a socialist in his economic views for he often expressed himself vigorously against capitalism. Often Barth has been critical towards the United States. During his recent visit, Barth attacked the United States for its handling of prisons. Unfortunately Barth singled out one prison known for its overcrowded conditions, and, by using that isolated example, he condemned the United States for its inhumanitarianism. When visitors offer criticisms they should balance such with the good which can be found in the country where they are guests. The famous theologian also was critical of our race relations and the stubborn practice of segregation which still exists within the United States. Somehow, Barth fails to appreciate the fact that no other minority group elsewhere in world history has made such a rapid advancement as the American Negro. From slavery,

which existed here less than a hundred years ago, the Negro has made phenomenal progress in that he has entered our arts, sports, government positions as well as in business responsibilities and professions too numerous to mention. Civil Rights are being expanded rapidly, and more and more Negroes are voting each year, and an ever larger number find their way into our educational institutions and are being equipped for the various professions. Certainly the American people desire to see much greater progress in this regard, but the fact remains that Barth chooses to see only what he wants to see.

Karl Barth has never come out openly against Communism. When Hungary was ruthlessly butchered a few years ago he remained the only important theological leader who refused to condemn the ruthless rape of a nation which was struggling to shake off the shackles of Communist tyranny imposed on it by the Soviet Union. When he was pressed for a statement regarding Hungary he was always evasive on that subject.

Moreover, the famous Swiss theologian also has advocated that the West give up the nuclear weapons in order that the Soviet Union might have confidence in the Free World. All loyal Americans consider such a proposal not only naive, but also the sure road to the enslavement of the freedom loving nations, by the communists. In addition, Barth categorizes anti-communism in the same class as communism. This is a serious defect in Barth's political philosophy.

WHAT LEADERS

SAY ABOUT BARTH

By many testimonialists Barth has

been variously condemned as a heretic a narrow-minded Biblicist, and an atheist in disguise—and on the other hand, he has been praised by others as the most creative theologian since John Calvin. Harvard's German-born Paul Tillich calls Barth, "the most monumental writer of our time." In contrast, Reinhold Niebohr describes Barth as "a man of infinite imagination and irresponsibility and a writer of irrelevant theology." Further, he says "in a way Barth is a great man, but he is an irresponsible genius." Concerning Barth's theology Niebohr says, "It is designed for the church of the catacombs." And finally, Niebohr declares "I do not read Barth any more." Hans Frei of Yale calls Barth "a Christ-in-toxicated man." The verdict concerning Barth, which comes closest to expressing my own personal view, is given by Dr. Cornelius Van Til of Westminster Theological Seminary who charges that "Barthianism is even more hostile to the theology of Luther and Calvin than Romanism."

The most famous expression coined by Barth is "The Encounter between God and man." This expression led the Editor of *Christianity Today* to use as a recent caption to one of his articles "Encountering Barth at Chicago." Barth has continually emphasized the togetherness of God and man — a union of two totally different kinds of beings. Unquestionably the centrality of Christ in Barth's theology is a commendable thing were it not cancelled out by his other defective views in theology.

THE PARADOX OF BARTH'S THEOLOGY

Barth's theology or God-thinking has been commonly called "neo-or-

thodoxy and the theology of crisis." His most repeated expression is that the "Bible is a witness to Christ." Again and again the famous theologian speaks of the authority of the Bible and the majesty of the person of Christ, yet at the same time he admits that the Bible is full of errors and inconsistencies, and that the Virgin Birth doctrine is not one of primary importance. He accuses Protestants of making the Bible into "a paper-Pope." He believes, nevertheless, that the Bible testifies to God's Word which is revealed to man through human speech. The most acceptable point in Barth's theology is his declaration that the decisive center of the Bible is its witness of Jesus Christ. Barth believes the Word came to man in the person of Christ. This rather acceptable generalization does not cancel out his other disparaging remarks made with reference to the Bible. The supreme weakness of Barth's position is his assertion of the authority of the Scriptures, while at the same time admitting that many human errors are found in the Bible.

While exalting Christ, as it appears in his writings, yet Barth fails to come out wholly or unequivocally for the truth of the Virgin Birth and the bodily resurrection of the Lord. During his American visit he neither rejected nor endorsed these doctrines to the satisfaction of evangelicals. He became rather furious when Carl Henry asked him how he thought reporters would have written up the story of Christ's resurrection were they present at the time. Indeed, Barth as much as denied the bodily resurrection of the Lord.

With regard to universalism, Barth does not openly advocate that concept, but, from answers to ques-

tions directed to him in Chicago, it is clear that he was willing to give comfort to those holding to universalism. The paradoxical position of Barth on several fundamental theological points makes him an unreliable scholar and totally unacceptable so far as evangelicals are concerned. He must be judged by his own writings and by the public declarations made.

OUR CONCLUSION

What then should be our answer to Barthianism? First of all it should be thoroughly understood. Then it should be feared just like the old style modernism, which from a different angle, also denies the Bible, its Christ, and our salvation. Moreover, it should be opposed because God's Word tells us to come out from among the new-fangled systems of unbelief which will appear during the latter days. The real answer to Barthianism, of course, is found in so clear a preaching of the truth, and so powerful an emphasis on the fundamentals of our faith, that any denial will be recognized for what it is, and will be at once renounced. Barthianism has gained headway not only in the modernistic church, but it has involved many groups and individuals who have been generally regarded as being conservatives. This is a very distressing situation which I have discovered all across the land. Let us be awake to this new error, and ever recur to the old truths. We need today the old-time power available only through the presentation of the historic Christian faith. Barthianism must be recognized as simply a new garment for liberalism. While it opposes optimistic liberalism, it does not anchor itself to the historical pillars of the infallible word of God.

IS THE BOOK OF MORMON A CREDIBLE SOURCE BOOK?

Rev. Gordon H. Fraser

Director of Southwest School of Missions, Flagstaff, Arizona

Milton R. Hunter of the First Council of the Seventy of the Mormon church, exerts a great deal of effort as an apologist for the accuracy of the Book of Mormon. His special field is in attempting to prove that the Book of Mormon is a true account of the happenings on the American continents during the period between 600 B.C. and 421 A.D.

In his introduction to *Ancient America and the Book of Mormon*, Dr. Hunter states:

"Of all the books, articles, and statements that have come from the press since 1492 endeavoring to throw light on the history of the land, the greatest and most authentic is the Book of Mormon—this book was written by holy prophets of God—at the time the events occurred, and the writings cover a period from the time of the building of the tower of Babel down to 421 A.D. Herein lies the most authoritative, true, and detailed history of ancient America—however, one hundred and twenty years have passed since the Book of Mormon came from the press and it has been almost completely ignored by those who should be interested in its claims because they profess to be seekers after truth. Reference is being made to the archaeologists and anthropologists, students of American antiquities."

These statements by Dr. Hunter are incautious to say the least. The fact is that scores of fully qualified students of literature, religion, history, anthropology, archaeology and philology have examined the Book of Mormon, some very critically but

objectively, and some more casually, and have published their findings. But if all, except the Mormons, have rejected the book as a true source of information, it is because, being serious students, they have been forced to do so because it contributes nothing to the store of knowledge in these various fields.

One could not expect a student of literature, for instance, to give much study to a book that violates most of the rules of good writing within the first few paragraphs. The book is insignificant and tasteless as a piece of literature. It has no plot and winds its way through a mass of plagiarism and bad grammar to a dismal and purposeless ending. It has no poetry except that which has been plagiarized from the King James version of the Bible. It contains no statement of philosophy or ethics except within the portions that have been borrowed from the Bible.

As a book of religion it is valueless, as even the Mormons do not base their present day teachings on it. It was outdated for this purpose within 15 years of its publication by the later writings of Joseph Smith, the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price. It contains no plan of salvation except in a corrupted version of what is already given in the Bible. It is a poorly presented mixture of Judaism and Christianity produced by writers who were ignorant of the text and meaning both Judaism and Christianity, whose language they parrot. Its ecclesiology is obviously that which Sidney Rigdon borrowed from Alexander Campbell. Its theology is Ar-

minian. It suggests no doctrines or religious rites that were not already current at the time, and in the area, where it was published.

No historian could be expected to use the Book of Mormon seriously as a source book when its pattern of events so completely violates the historical behavior of the human race. No nations could have survived which were exposed to such a continuous orgy of warfare as makes up two-thirds of the volume of the book. There has been no period of history as bloody as is suggested in the Book of Mormon, in spite of the fact that there have been relatively few periods of peace throughout the known history of the world.

No anthropologist could be expected to accept the data of the Book of Mormon when he already knows how the ancient Americans lived, what they ate, how they farmed, what implements they used, how they made their clothing, which animals they knew, and a host of other factors that are totally at variances with the description contained in the Mormon record. Neither could the anthropologist tolerate the obvious error that Jews from Jerusalem in 600 B.C. could be transformed into Mongoloids when they set foot on American soil. There is not a serious anthropologist but will readily agree that the American Indians are of the Mongoloid family of the human race.

No archaeologist could accept the record of the Book of Mormon when he knows that not one statement in the book can be brought into harmony with the wealth of information that has been unearthed in the countries in question. The Smithsonian Institute has been questioned on this point so many times that they have found it necessary to pre-

pare a mimeographed letter to questioners, stating that they know of no qualified archaeologist who has used the Book of Mormon as a source book and that they see no comparison between the Mormon record and the established facts of early American archaeology.

No philologist could be expected to give credence to the story of the golden plates and the characters that Joseph Smith claims to have preserved for evidence when he knows the language and script that were used by the ancient Americans, and that these bear no resemblance either in form or philosophy to Smith's samples.

Our philologist would be especially astonished if he were to read Joseph Smith's defense of the characters in the sample that was supposed to have been extracted from the golden plates. Smith quotes a report made by Martin Harris on his return from New York where he showed the sample to Dr. Charles Anthon of Columbia University. Anthon is supposed to have stated that the characters in the sample were of several languages, Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac and Arabic. Obviously no document would have been prepared in the scripts of such diverse languages. There would have to be the hieroglyphics of Egypt, the cuneiform of Chaldea and the Semitic of Arabia. As for the Assyriac no savant would use such a term. If Syriac were meant, the script would have been one of the Semitic scripts. If Assyrian were meant, cuneiform would have been used. There is neither cuneiform, Semitic nor Egyptian displayed in Smith's sample.

The philologist could not be expected seriously to consider the inconsistent nomenclature of the Book

of Mormon when these names are easily demonstrated to be made up of a combination of Hebrew names in their Anglicised form, completely synthetic names composed of Hebrew phonemes but without any logical meaning, and a great array of names that pertain to no recognizable pattern, except that they are composed of Indo-Aryan phonemes which are totally incompatible with the known phonemes of the American Indian languages. All of this is made more ridiculous by the fact that the format of the names used by the writer of the Book of Mormon remains unchanged, both in variety of form and in their phonemes from the time of the building of the Tower of Babel, down through nearly three thousand years of time.

The Book of Mormon insists that the language of the Jaredites "who came from the building of the great tower" was an uncorrupted language, because the Jaredites implored the Lord not to confuse their tongue; yet we find in the chapters devoted to the story of the Jaredites, their travel to America and their sojourn here, that the names are as varied as those covering the last thousand years of the Book of Mormon period. Moreover they are

composed of the same Anglicised Hebrew names, and a whole range of others composed of the Indo-Aryan phonemes, neither of which language families were in existence until hundreds of years after their conceded date of the Tower of Babel, and the confusion of tongues.

Mormons are outraged when we criticise the Book of Mormons. "You are robbing us of our scriptures" they say. We are too late to do this — Joseph Smith already did this when he substituted his subsequent volumes which are so completely at variance with the Book of Mormon.

The Bible is still the infallible Word of God which does not hesitate to tell us that all have sinned and also that Christ died for sinners. This is unpalatable to all who would like to gain heaven through their good works, but it is an unbeatable formula for the treatment of the virus of sin. Millions have accepted God's Book and its unique Saviour and have entered into life. God's message in His Book is that whosoever will may take of the water of life freely. May our readers have the good sense to accept the proven message of the Bible and reject the unproven substitute.

SOME LISTINGS FROM OUR CATALOG

(Please add 10% as a mailing charge on orders up to \$5.)

1. THE MAZE OF MORMONISM, by Rev. Walter R. Martin. This book is designed primarily to be a concise handbook on Mormon history and theology for Christian workers. It is a scholarly, understandable, and well documented treatise with Bibliography, and index. 186 pp., price \$2.95.
2. THE BOOK OF MORMON,, TRUE OR FALSE, by Arthur Budvarson. It has over a dozen pages photostatically copied from the first (1830) edition of The Book of Mormon. It gives most conclusive evidence of the falsity of the claims for the Book. 63 pp., price \$1.

(Continued on page thirteen)

BOOK OF MORMON TESTED AND FOUND WANTING

Prof. John E. Dahlin

Every system of religion must be tested on the basis of its position, with regard to the Holy Scriptures, as well as the veracity of its historical records and claims. On both of these premises the Mormon Church fails entirely to stand up under a fair test. It will be possible for me to point out only a few such instances in this brief article. The discussion should alert intelligent readers, even a Mormon, who has taken too much for granted with reference to the Book of Mormon and his religion. It does not matter how much good achievements present-day Mormons can point to pertaining to their economic life and standards of performances where they are concentrated, their origin and religious system still must be judged largely in relation to the Book of Mormon. The Mormon record of infamy, in their formative period, must remain as a millstone attached to their religious system.

THE HISTORICAL ABSURDITY OF THEIR BOOK

First, is the myth of the Gold Plates. Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, made the claim that an angel by the name Moroni came to him and told him about certain gold plates buried in the earth which he was to receive and translate, and which would become the Book of Mormon. Their church teaches that the angel referred to in Revelation 14:6 is the angel Moroni who came to Joseph Smith and delivered this message, and as a result the Mormon Church had its beginning. With utter disregard for proper Bible exegeses and historical setting, Mormon writers wrest

verses completely out of their context and make such to mean whatever these subjective writers want them to mean. This particular passage in Revelation 14 has to do with the Great Tribulation coming to this earth during the end-time.

What shall we say about the three only characters or witnesses who supposedly saw the original Gold Plates from which the Book of Mormon was taken? From *Times and Seasons*, edited by Joseph Smith himself, the three characters in question, Cowdrey, Whitmer, and Harris, are accused of circulating slanderous reports of the Latter Day Saints. What good is their affidavit in the opening pages in the Book of Mormon if these men circulated false and slanderous reports? Joseph Smith later classifies them as "debased and villianous fellows."

What about the character of the founder, Joseph Smith? The records reveal that he was eventually expelled and rejected in every community of America where he carried on his activities. He was looked upon as a poison-peddler of evil things, hence a mob stormed the jail-house at Carthage, Illinois where he and his brother Hyrum were confined. Both of the occupants of the cells were murdered. This mob-action cannot be approved, of course, but it is indicative of how bad the record of Joseph Smith was as a young man. Sovereign states branded him as one being dangerous to people living in law-abiding communities on the frontier.

THE MYTH OF AUTHORITY OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

Even if the record of the founder and the witnesses referred to had

been reputable, the Book of Mormon loses any claim of authority because thousands of changes have been made in the text during the past century by later Mormon innovators. The numerous changes inserted in recent generations have made the book a patch-work rather than a reliable text. This assertion of mine is important because Mormons claim authority for their Book.

Moreover, if the Book of Mormon is a God-given book, then it is reasonable to expect it to be in agreement with the Bible, yet when examined it is found to grossly contradict the Word of God. The Mormon record is unreliable for it contradicts even concerning the record of the birthplace of Jesus Christ. Their Book says He was born in Jerusalem; the Bible says Bethlehem. If space were available it would be relatively easy to find a number of direct contradictions with reference to the Book of Mormon and the Bible.

Again, the Book of Mormon copies from the King James Version of the Bible, (which was not translated for more than a thousand years after the Book of Mormon was supposed to have been completed). The Mormons claim their original record was written in "Reformed Egyptian" language giving an account of the people who supposedly lived on the American continent from B. C. 600 to A. D. 421, which were said to have been sealed up and hidden in the ground and then, fourteen hundred years later, in 1829, delivered by a heavenly messenger and translated into modern speech. This, supposedly is the main Mormon Bible (their distinctive religious book). The Mormon claim is incongruous and absurd when we discover that at

least twenty-seven thousand words from the King James translation of the Bible, are found in the Book of Mormon.

Finally, it is well for us to listen to an authority which speaks only when all evidences have been examined and thoroughly evaluated. The famous Smithsonian Institute of Washington, D. C., (known for its scientific accuracy and reliability), in letters to Larry S. Jonas, (well known student of Mormonism), rejects the Book of Mormon as having no historical value.

THE MYTH OF THE NEPHITES AND LAMANITES

The Book of Mormon, with the exception of the Book of Ether, is the professed history of the Nephites and Lamanites, (named after two brothers, Nephi and Laman,) who left the city of Jerusalem with them and journeyed overland and oceans six hundred years before Christ, finally coming to the shores of South America. The Nephites were eventually destroyed, and the Lamanites then possessed the North, Central and South Americas. The Mormons claim that the Indians of the Americas are the Lamanites. The Smithsonian Institute speaking widely for scholars and archeologists say, "The physical features of the American Indians are Mongoloid, being related to that of peoples of eastern, central, and northeastern Asia. It is believed by this respected scientific institution that the ancestors of the present Indians came into the new world - probably over a land bridge known to have existed in the Bering Strait region during the last ice age -- in a continuous series of small migrations beginning many thousand years ago. In a formal statement the Smithsonian Institute

says, "We know of no authentic cases of ancient Egyptian or Hebrew writing having been found in the new world." The Mormons' claim, that their Book was written in "Egyptian Hieroglyphics," is entirely false. Yet they have the audacity to declare that their prophet, Joseph Smith, by means of peep-stones (spectacles) entitled "Urim and Thummim", was able to translate the "Egyptian Hieroglyphics" into English which his loyal secretaries transcribed for him. By the way, it should be pointed out that these secretaries were later excommunicated from the Mormon faith as counterfeiters.

In view of the above, what then is the only possible verdict? The Book of Mormon, it seems to me, is one of the most cunning, wicked, bold, deep-laid impositions ever palmed off upon the world, calculated to deceive millions who receive it as the Word of God. It is interesting to note that Mark Twain once made a descriptive remark that the Book of Mormon was "chloroform in print." This is a most fitting delineation of the book when we see how it anesthetizes those who have put their faith in it. The Mormon Church must be judged by the Book to which they are committed.

From the above citation of facts and conclusions, it is clearly evident to all intelligent people that the

Mormon claims of an exclusive message, infallible prophets, higher revelations, constitute as great a fraud as ever was perpetrated in these United States. Despite their fairly sound economic practices and standards of conduct, as you may find in Utah and elsewhere, their religion has never been purged of these fantastic claims and evil doctrines. In none of the great doctrines of the Bible do they hold identical positions with evangelicals. Mormonism must be branded and identified as one of the worst cults ever devised by warped minds. One must come to grips with these unvarnished facts of the origin of Mormonism and their historical record. Certain present-day evidence of respectability maintained by the Mormons of our time, cannot erase the evil centered in their religious system. Their origin is crowded with facts substantiating their cruelty, immorality, and outright opposition to all that which has been cherished in this land as the American way of life. Before Utah could enter the Union as a state the Mormon leaders had to pledge their abandonment of polygamy and practices which were out of harmony with the concepts of a Christian nation. Their present refinement and the abandonment of certain evil practices of earlier years have not erased the ugly scars of Mormonism. They are still visible for all who make a factual study of Mormonism.

OUR NEW CATALOG JUST OUT

The New Catalog listing all our offerings, is just off the press and will be sent free to anyone making request for it. The listings of the materials of the various categories of the cults is so arranged as to make it easy to locate the desired literature.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH MORMONISM?

Louis T. Talbot

The following article is taken from a booklet by Dr. Louis T. Talbot, with the above title (Used by permission).

Present-day Mormonism, with its magnificent temples, its great political influence, its immense wealth, and its apparent piety, seems a far cry from the illiterate young money-digger, Joseph Smith, with his "golden plates" and his "peepstone," who, in the early part of the nineteenth century was accepted by many as a prophet of God, and who, with others, laid the foundations of the Mormon sect, upon which Brigham Young built the superstructure. But beneath the surface of impressive modern architecture and the roll of mighty organ music lie the same unscriptural, anti-Christian teachings upon which the Mormon Church was based originally. No outward forms of respectability and culture can wipe out the stain left upon American history by the scandalous lives of the Mormon "founding fathers" or disguise the wicked views with regard to God, the Bible, and the Lord Jesus Christ, as taught by them and their followers, and passed on to the present generation.

Every sect has some distinguishing mark which sets it apart from other systems. Seventh-day Adventism emphasizes the Jewish sabbath and the imaginary "sanctuary"; Christian Science denies the reality of the world, sin, and the shed blood of the Saviour; Jehovah's Witnesses denounce the Trinity and the deity of Christ. Mormonism alone — of American religions — deifies sex. While this teaching and practice characterize some Asiatic cults, Mormonism has the distinction of being the one system in the United States whose god is man, and whose worshippers may become gods.

Dr. R. G. McNiece, over twenty years a pastor in Salt Lake City, and one well acquainted with Mormonism and Brigham Young, declared that this sect was a "counterfeit" in four respects: it was a counterfeit religion, or an imitation of Christianity; it possessed a counterfeit Bible, the Book of Mormon; it had a counterfeit priesthood, the Melchizedek and Aaronic orders; and it claimed a counterfeit group of apostles, the Mormon apostolate. To this I would add a counterfeit god, for the exalted man-god the Mormons worship is not the Holy God revealed in the Holy Bible by the Holy Son through the power of the Holy Ghost.

With unlimited financial resources, for every Mormon tithes his income, and with a fantastically-efficient organization which utilizes every member from the youngest to the eldest, Mormonism is growing rapidly. It is a proselyting religion, preying upon church members. It operates in the guise of a Bible-believing denomination, whereas in reality it holds not one truly Scriptural tenet.

Recently two Mormon elders were asked why they carried Bibles under their arms when they rejected what the Bible taught. They replied quite frankly, "Oh, it is just a means of getting our foot in the door!" Statistics show that in 1955 the Mormons numbered 1,357,254, and that they were increasing at the rate of 50,000 new members annually. Here is a great, almost untouched mission field at our very doors. The Mormons are actually sending missionaries to the Protestants. What are we doing to lead them to Christ?

Mormonism had its beginning during the last century when our country was just awaking to its possibilities as a great industrial and agricultural land and had its part in the opening of the West. The name Mormon is derived from an imaginary ancient prophet, purported to be the father of the "Angel Moroni," who supposedly delivered the "golden plates" to Joseph Smith. Mormon was said to be a very early inhabitant of America. The word is now a nickname and, will always designate those who accept the Book of Mormon and follow Joseph Smith and Brigham Young.

The two principal divisions of the Mormons are the branch in Salt Lake City which calls itself "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," and the branch in Independence, Missouri, officially entitled, "The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." The Reorganized Church as such officially came into being at a conference in Beloit, Wisconsin, in June, 1852, when all connection with Young and other professed Mormon leaders was severed. This group declared that the successor of Joseph Smith "must of necessity be of the seed of Joseph Smith, Jr." In April 1860 Joseph's son and namesake was acclaimed head of the church. Twice this church has been pronounced by the United States courts to be the actual Mormon Church. Quite naturally this branch is called "Josephites"; and the branch in Salt Lake City founded by Brigham Young "Brighamites."

In their separation from each other these two Mormon branches are inconsistent. The Josephites, after Smith's death, repudiated polygamy, but they revere Joseph Smith who taught it and practiced it. Of

course, they deny this but the evidences are against them. It is true that polygamy is not taught in the Book of Mormon; Sidney Rigdon saw to that. The Reorganized Church also rejects the Adam-god teaching of the Utah branch. At the same time it is a well-documented fact that Joseph Smith himself believed and taught this doctrine. Consequently the two branches have different versions of the Book of Mormon and of their official creeds as outlined in "Doctrines and Covenants." The infamous Section 132, of which we shall have much more to say, which appears in the Salt Lake City version, has simply been removed by the Reorganized Branch, although evidence is not lacking that this was Joseph's own composition.

The Brighamites reject Smith's blasphemous "Inspired Version" of the Bible, published in 1865, but at the same time accept portions of this version which are included in their approved book, *The Pearl of Great Price*. This latter book, altered to suit each group, is in good standing with both.

With these exceptions, the teachings of the two branches are almost identical. Both groups accept Joseph Smith as an inspired prophet of God; both believe the Book of Mormon to be inspired; both believe the writings of Smith and other leaders to be divinely authoritative; both are highly organized with priesthoods and apostolates; both teach salvation by good works, baptismal regeneration, and that there is no hell in the Bible sense—only punishment and reward based upon one's deeds.

Four other Mormon bodies are listed in the 1955 World Almanac. One group calling themselves

"Church of Christ, Headquarters Temple Lot, Independence, Mo." refuses to be denominated Mormons, although that is what they are. They publish *Zion's Advocate*, and are very zealous, sending out missionaries, Bibles in hand, transforming

themselves into "angels of light" to make converts as do all Mormons. The other divisions are: Church of Jesus Christ (Bickertonites); Church of Jesus Christ (Cutlerites); and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Strangites).

Listings from Our Catalog---Continued

3. **MORMON CLAIMS EXAMINED**, by Larry S. Jonas. In this well documented booklet, the author undercuts the Mormon Claims of a special revelation by showing that the "facts" revealed were existing when Joseph Smith began to write the Book of Mormon. It contains 85 large pages; good print. Price \$1.
4. **WHAT'S WRONG WITH MORMONISM?**, by Dr. Louis T. Talbot. A very fine general treatise, dealing with the origin of the book; the falsity of it; its conflicts with scripture; their history.
5. **MORMONISM UNDER THE SEARCHLIGHT**, by W. S. Biederwolf. A rather drastic treatment of the Mormons. Interesting and revealing, 70 pp., Price 50c.
6. **IS MORMONISM CHRISTIAN?**, by Rev. Gordon Fraser. He deals with: the Mormons and the Bible; God; the Trinity; Jesus Christ; the Holy Spirit. The Mormon Doctrine of Man; Salvation; Baptism; and Baptism for the Dead. A Conclusion (gives seven Questions for evaluating any religion).
7. **MORMONISM**, by Einer Anderson (an ex-Mormon). He gives his personal testimony. An interesting and fascinating story. 32 pp. 25c.
8. **A REFUTATION to "A FRIENDLY DISCUSSION"** (A Booklet Distributed by the Mormon Church). A 40 pp. booklet. 25c.
9. **WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR AUTHORITY**, by Maria C. Vellinga (An ex-Mormon). An interesting and worth while witness. 28 pp. 20c.
10. **MORMONISM: A Great Delusion**, by A. J. Pollock, (an English writer). He exposes Mormonism by comparing quotes from their own writings with scripture.. 16 pp., 10c.
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14. **WRESTING THE SCRIPTURES, (OR THE MORMONS' MIS-USE OF SCRIPTURE)**, by The Utah Christian Tract Society. A 28 page tract, 10c. (Very helpful in dealing personally with a Mormon.)

WHOSE WORD WOULD YOU TAKE?

(Excerpts from a tract by Arthur Budvarson under the above caption)

At the close of an open discussion meeting, three teen-age boys approached me and began asking questions. The subject of the meeting had been, "Mormonism versus Christianity". We appreciated the privilege of answering the many questions which were asked by these fine looking youngsters.

Finally, one of the boys asked the question, "What do you think of Joseph Smith?" I asked the lad how old he was and he answered, "Fourteen years old," and also said that he held the Aaronic priesthood in the Mormon Church.

I held out to him the Bible which I had in my hand and said, "God, Who is no respecter of persons, declares this to be His Infallible Word. Millions of people have passed on into eternity with the testimony that the Bible is God's complete revelation to man and millions of people today will testify to the same truth, and their testimony is valid for we read in Hebrews 1:1,2, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds . . ." And in I Peter 1:23-25, God's Word declares, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. 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 forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

"Now," I continued, "suppose you, a fourteen-year-old boy, would come out and claim that you had had a vision and had been told that all those who believed such things (i.e., as the Word of God, the Bible, teaches) were wrong and that they were an abomination in God's sight, how would you expect to be received?" The answer this young boy gave was quite startling. He said, "I should be put in a strait-jacket!"

I then had the opportunity to read to him from the Word of God the wonderful gospel story, "how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures;" also, "that He bore our sins in His own body on the cross," and that "by believing in and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ we are saved." (I Cor. 15:1-4, I Peter 2:24, Romans 10:9-10). This young boy then readily believed the Word of God and received the Lord Jesus Christ as his own Saviour.

The question this young boy asked at the beginning of our conversation is a very vital question. To thousands of people it can mean the difference between eternal life and eternal death! What do you think of Joseph Smith? Let us examine some of the teachings which he proclaimed, and also see what the Word of God says about them.

Joseph Smith, Jr., said he was about fourteen years old when the following event was supposed to have taken place. The account was first printed in 1838, eighteen years after it happened. The foundation of the Mormon church is built upon

what was supposed to have happened to a fourteen-year-old boy, and that without any witnesses whatsoever?

Joseph Smith, Jr., said:

"Sometime in the second year after our removal to Manchester, there was in the place where we lived an unusual excitement on the subject of religion. It commenced with the Methodists, but soon became general among all the sects in that region of the country . . . some were contending for the Methodist faith, some for the Presbyterian, and some for the Baptist . . ." Then, he relates that his mother, Lucy Smith, and his brothers and a sister, joined the Presbyterian church, but Joseph said, ". . . I kept myself aloof from all these parties, though I attended their several meetings as often as occasion would permit . . ." The decision of his mother, brothers and sister in joining the Presbyterian church evidently had no influence whatsoever on Joseph, for he stated, ". . . I often said to myself: What is to be done? Who of all these parties are right; or, are they all wrong together . . . ?" After this he claims he prayed to inquire which of all the sects was right, and that two personages appeared to him in a vision. His account continues. ". . . I asked the personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects

was right—and which I should join. 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 an abomination in his sight . . ." (From Joseph Smith's Own Story).

Although Joseph Smith covers all the sects (as he calls them), he specifically names the three great fundamental denominations of his day, the Methodist, the Presbyterian, and the Baptist. These fundamental churches, whose clergy—evangelists, pastors, teachers, missionaries, and laymen—stood for and proclaimed, the Word of God, the Holy Bible!

God's Word, the Bible, declares:

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." II Peter 2:1, 2.

". . . Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." II Corin. 11: 14, 15.

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PERTINENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

*By "Pastor Mac" of Spiritual Clinic
and Pastor of Powderhorn Park Baptist Church, Minneapolis*

QUESTION—*Can you explain to me the Mormon idea of salvation?*

ANSWER—For the most part the biblical doctrine of sin is replaced with the idea of sins (for example, smoking, drinking alcohol, coffee, tea), none of which merit everlasting punishment. Therefore, salvation (to the Mormon) becomes a matter of striving to reach the highest degree of glory, that is, Godhood itself. The path upward begins with repentance (mainly from the above sins). Mormon baptism, laying on of hands, and church membership. However, the highest or celestial glory can only be reached through the various temple ceremonies. In the temple, living Mormons may go through baptism and the other ceremonies on behalf of their dead relatives and thus deliver their spirits from the "prison house" and enable them to progress toward exaltation.

But the pinnacle of celestial glory, Godhood itself, can only be reached through the temple ceremony that claims (contrary to Christ's express teaching in Luke 20:34, first half) to seal husbands and wives in marriage for time and "eternity." This doctrine is based on the teaching in Smith's revelation sanctioning polygamy, in which he made Godhood dependent on man's ability to beget innumerable children throughout eternity.

The Gospel is reduced in Mormonism to laws and ordinances brought to men by a Christ whose only function as Saviour is to guarantee to men a resurrection (contrast this with Colossians 2:9 thru 23). Mormonism completely misses real salvation and exaltation as a free gift of God's grace (see I Corinthians 1:26-31; and Ephesians 2:1-10); Philippians 2:5 thru 11). Note also in I Corinthians 15: the first eleven verses, the simple facts of the true Gospel.