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The Bible and Other Scriptures

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Abstract: The LDS church accepts both the Bible and the Book of Mormon to be the word of God. The Book of Mormon, however, has received a more correct translation than has the Bible.

There is only one way to comprehend God and the things of God, and the Apostle Paul struck the keynote when he said :

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

“But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” I. Cor. 2: 9-11.

And that is why the Spirit of God is given to every man, woman and child who joins the Church of Christ. We have received that Spirit as a gift from God, because we have done His will. Therefore we “know of the doctrine.” We have had faith, have repented of our sins, have had our sins washed away by baptism, and have received the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. That is the key to the situation.

Why couldn't Horace Greeley see what you and I see in “Mormonism?” Why couldn't Dr. Reiner see it? Why couldn't Bishop Spalding or Mr. Riley see it? Because they were without the Spirit that comprehends the things of God. And we, without that Spirit, would be just as short-sighted in our views, would make just as many mistakes as do other men in relation to the Lord's work. It is not our smartness, not our native intelligence that enables us to understand these things. We have come out from the Gentile world. We have their blood in our veins. We are no more intelligent than they, naturally; but we have received something that they do not possess; that is the whole solution. The credit is not to us; it is to our Father in Heaven, who has given us this precious gift, the power to comprehend Him and His purposes, and rightly interpret His word.

(TO BE CONTINUED).

THE BIBLE AND OTHER SCRIPTURES

JAMES E. TALMAGE

OF THE COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE

WE BELIEVE the Bible to be the word of God, as far as it is translated correctly. We also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God. (Articles of Faith, No. 8).

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints accepts the Holy Bible for just what it purports to be, nothing less, nothing more. Taken as a whole the Holy Bible is a collection of sacred and historical writings, depicting though incompletely the divine dealings with mankind on the Eastern Hemisphere from the creation down to about the first century after Christ. The Old

Testament contains a brief record of pre-Mosaic time, and largely a history of the Semitic people or Hebrews, as they lived under the law of Moses. The New Testament is distinctively the Scripture of the Gospel as contrasted with the Law, and is devoted to the earthly ministry of the Saviour and to the growth of His Church under apostolic administration. The compilation as it now stands is the work of men, and our modern translations from the original Hebrew of the Old Testament and Greek of the New have been made by skilled linguists and learned theologians.

But the wisdom of even the wisest of men may be faulty, and the understanding of the prudent may be biased and dangerously imperfect. The many revisions and successive versions of the Bible, made as the errors of the earlier renditions became strikingly apparent, testify to the unreliability of scholarship in the translation of Sacred Writ. Moreover, it is an indisputable fact that the compilation of books constituting our present version is incomplete; for within the Bible itself more than a score of books, epistles, or other writings not included are mentioned, and generally in such a way as to show that those lost Scriptures were considered authentic and genuine. Furthermore, numerous Biblical passages are tinged with what scholars call "gloss"—that is wording intended to convey the private interpretation of the translator.

The Latter-day Saints openly proclaim their reservation as to incorrect translation. We are in harmony with all able and earnest students of the Scriptures in accepting the Bible as the Word of God, only so far as it is translated correctly.

But we hold that there are now extant other Scriptures, of equal validity with those of the Holy Bible, and in no sense in conflict therewith nor a substitute thereof. For nearly six centuries before and about four centuries after the birth of Christ, the American continent was inhabited by a detached body of Israelites, who developed into powerful nations. Their existence was unknown to the people of the East. Is it unreasonable to believe that unto the western fold God sent His shepherds, and that prophets officiated among them by divine appointment?

That the Book of Mormon would be rejected by many on the specious and untenable claim that they already had a Bible and that there could be no other Scriptures, the Lord foretold by the mouth of the prophet Nephi:

“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. . . . 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, 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. And I do this that I may prove unto many that I am the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; and that I speak forth my words according to mine own pleasure. And because that I have spoken one word ye need not suppose that I cannot speak another; for my work is not yet finished; neither shall it be until the end of man, neither from that time henceforth and forever."—Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi, chap. 29.

It is noticeable that we make no reservation respecting the Book of Mormon on the ground of incorrect translation. To do so would be to ignore attested facts as to the bringing forth of that book. Joseph Smith the prophet, seer, and revelator, through whom the ancient record has been translated into our modern tongue, expressly avers that the translation was effected through the gift and power of God, and is in no sense the product of linguistic scholarship.

The Bible in its original form, and in modern versions so far as correctly translated, contains the Word of God. Without it, the world would be plunged into spiritual gloom. Nevertheless there are other Scriptures already published, and yet others are to come.

THE GREATNESS OF SIMPLICITY

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN surprised, shocked, and then delighted all Europe by appearing at the court of France in plain citizen's clothes. Religion, too, has had her court dress and her sounding court-titles, and official robes, and circuitous ceremonies. The world has felt horror-stricken whenever any brave and more believing spirit has ventured to ask the meaning of one of these theological tags and titles. But how much less wholesome is living water, if drunk out of a leaf or the palm of one's hand than if presented on a salver in a curiously jeweled flagon by a priest in livery? How much has theological ingenuity of statement and systematic divinity, which it takes the study of a life to understand, added to the power of the simplicity of Christ as He unfolded Himself in the Sermon on the Mount. Yet, if anyone has dared to be as simple as Christ Himself was in His own faith, he has been said to deny the Lord that bought him.—HENRY W. BELLOWS.

VICE is a monster of such hideous mien
That to be hated needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

ALEXANDER POPE.