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The Book of Mormon

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Abstract: This article testifies of Book of Mormon's truthfulness, exhorting all to read for "joy and solace." The Book of Mormon restores plain and precious things removed from Bible and does not depend on external evidences for its proof of divine origin.

lator (Rev. xiv, 6), and delivered the everlasting Gospel to the Prophet Joseph Smith, who came forth with the same promise the Savior gave in His day when upon the earth, that if any man would do the will of His Father he should know of the doctrine, whether it was of God or not, and that the signs should follow and be enjoyed by those who believed and obeyed the message of life and salvation, with all the gifts and blessings that were enjoyed by the ancient Saints.

The Elders of the Church have gone forth proclaiming the message of life and salvation to the inhabitants of the earth, warning them of the judgments that will be poured out upon those who will not know God nor obey the Gospel of His Son Jesus

Christ. After their testimony the prophet declared they should have the testimony of plagues, pestilence and famine, earthquakes, bloodshed, secret combinations, wars and rumors of wars. Desolation and death should stalk through the land, until the inhabitants of the earth should be destroyed and but few men left. Knowing these things, who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depths, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

THE BOOK OF MORMON.

(From the *Juvenile Instructor*.)

THE Latter-day Saints are frequently challenged to furnish evidences in proof of the divinity of the Book of Mormon. We notice that a preacher, who is out here as a missionary, is endeavoring to gain some notoriety by attacking the Book of Mormon through the columns of the papers. He seems to place a very low value upon it. His conduct proves the truth of at least one prediction in the book which he derides. The Lord, through Nephi, says, in speaking of the effect this book would have:

"Many of the Gentiles shall say, A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible."

This is, in effect, what this false teacher says, and thus he fulfills the prophet's words which were written some 2,400 years ago.

The Book of Mormon does not depend upon external evidence for its proofs of its divine origin.

The father of the Editor of the *Juvenile Instructor*, when the Book of Mormon was first handed to him, read it through twice, and after finishing it the second time, laid the book down with the remark that "A bad man could not write such a book and a good man would not write it;" that

is, a good man in and of himself would not write it; he would have to be inspired of the Lord to do it.

No one can read that divine record in the proper spirit without receiving a testimony from the Lord that it is divine. Its teachings are pure and of the most elevating character. Its simplicity causes it to be easily understood by children and persons of limited education. They who read it need not be in doubt concerning the principles of salvation. The doctrines of the Gospel are set forth with charming and convincing clearness. One is not left to query respecting the steps necessary to be taken to become a member of the Church of Christ.

There is no room for argument concerning how a man shall be baptized, or by whom he shall be baptized, in order to be accepted of the Lord.

The mission of the Savior and the great atonement wrought by Him are described so beautifully that to understand it is only necessary to read; while the condition of the spirits of the just and the unjust after death, and the resurrection of the body, are explained in such simple language and detail that every one who desires can comprehend them.

We value the Bible as a wonderful record of God's dealings with the children of men. It is a glorious book, and is of immense value to mankind; but it has been sadly mutilated. It has passed through many hands and several versions of it exist. Its translators were not inspired, and were unfit for the task which they assumed; and, worse than all, many precious parts of it have been taken from it. One of the prophets of the Book of Mormon, speaking of the Bible, says:

"For behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb, many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away.

"And all these have they done, that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord; that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men.

"Wherefore, thou seest that after the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, that there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God.

"And after these plain and precious things were taken away, it goeth unto all the nations of the Gentiles; and after it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles, yea, even across the many waters which thou hast seen with the Gentiles which have gone forth out of captivity; thou seest because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book, which were plain unto the understanding of the children of men, according to the plainness which is in the Lamb of God; because of these things which are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb, an exceeding great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them."

This accounts for the vagueness with which that record speaks concerning some points of doctrine and ordinances. The need of an inspired translation of the Bible is seen in the hundreds of different sects which exist in Christendom, all claiming to have followed the Bible as their guide in the organization of their churches and in the preaching of their doctrines.

What a glorious work was accomplished by the Lord in the revelation of the Book of Mormon! It came to the world in purity by the gift of inspiration. It dispelled darkness and doubt. It cleared away difficulties, and made plain to mankind the path of salvation. Joined with the Bible, they make two powerful witnesses to the truth of heaven. With these two records no man need be in doubt as to the requirements which the Lord makes of His children. Upon points which, with the Bible alone, there might be contending opinions, with the Book of Mormon in addition, they are speedily settled, and mankind are enabled to drink at the pure fountain of truth, and find it no longer necessary to squabble concerning ordinances and doctrines.

We wish this book was read more extensively by our people, especially by the young. We long for the time to come when it will be a text book in our schools. The influence which it exerts over the minds of those who read it is soothing and heavenly. It creates impressions upon the young concerning holiness and the manner of life which is most acceptable to our God that can never be effaced. The lessons of faith which it conveys have a most marked effect upon the lives of children who are brought up to carefully read it and to treasure its precepts.

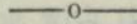
In the early days of our experience as a missionary we were placed in circumstances which were naturally trying and depressing. For the first time in our life we were away from home and far from all our kindred and friends. In a strange land, among a strange people, whose language was strange, we were made to feel our loneliness, especially so when compelled by persecution to take refuge among a poor people who had so little food that for some weeks our principal sustenance was wild berries. It was then that we found the value of the Book of Mormon. It was our solace and joy; and we never read its pages without deriving profit from its lessons and heavenly comfort from the sweet spirit which they contained. It was indeed a comforter to us; it removed depression, inspired hope

and faith, and stimulated us to persevere in the labor before us.

If any one doubts that the prayerful reading of this precious book produces these effects, they can easily prove for themselves the correctness of our testimony. When trouble or

affliction comes upon men and women's souls, and they need comfort and peace, let them prayerfully read the Book of Mormon, and we know they will obtain an evidence of its divinity that will satisfy them, though they may have never had it before.

THE ANDOVER CREED.



WHAT is described as "the burning religious question of the hour" in Boston and New England, and which is a matter of deep interest among members of the congregational denomination everywhere, is the disputed dogma of the Andover Creed relative to a future probation. That creed in its present form forbids the idea of repentance after death, but for some years past a broader view of man's future estate has been spreading among the ministers and lay members of that sect, occasioning a vast amount of controversy. In fact, a division of the entire denomination over this question has been feared.

Andover Theological Seminary is the ecclesiastical centre of the sect. It is the seat of learning from which is sent forth its authoritative teachings, and hence the term "Andover Creed" as applied to its articles of faith. To receive an education and ordination at Andover is the ambition of the theological students of the sect, and the veneration in which this old seat of learning is held by Congregationalists generally, is marked. Every five years the entire faculty assemble in a solemn manner, listen to the reading of the Andover Creed, and re-affirm their implicit and unshaken faith in its truth. Thus far the professors of the Seminary have all observed this rite at the set time, though some of them have been charged with hypocrisy for so doing.

The matter of the disputed doctrine is now likely to be brought to a speedy issue. Three prominent Congregationalists of the old school, two of them retired pastors, have brought charges of heresy against five professors of the Seminary, who are members of the editorial staff of the *Andover Review*, a heretofore autho-

ritative organ of the denomination. The alleged heresy consists in the idea "that heathens who died without hearing the Gospel have another chance for salvation instead of going straight to hell."

It appears that Andover Theological Seminary is in great part supported by a trust fund conditioned upon the doctrinal views of the professors, and here lies the ground in which the dispute will probably be carried into the civil courts. An ecclesiastical tribunal termed the Board of Visitors is shortly to hold a session at Andover for the purpose of determining whether or not some of the faculty of the Seminary are apostatizing, and the indications now are that there will be an extensive schism in the sect throughout the United States, as well as a gigantic law suit in the civil courts, imperiling the existence of its principal school of training for ministers.

It is gratifying to notice the numerous indications that the teachings of the Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are gradually leavening the religious lump. The doctrine which is causing the present commotion among the subscribers to the Andover Creed has been proclaimed by them for fifty years. It is simply the doctrine of salvation for those who die without a knowledge of the true Gospel, involving the preaching of the divine message to the spirits of the dead. The doctrine, as embodied in the faith of the Saints, incorporates the performance of vicarious ordinance work for the departed, that being the principal labor done in Temples erected to the name of the Most High.—*Deseret News*, Oct. 25th.