

J5 JONES, Dan. *Beth yw Mormoniaeth?* (What is Mormonism?) *Merthyr Tydfil: Published and for sale by D. Jones, John Jones, Printer, [1846?]*.

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The source of inspiration for *Beth yw Mormoniaeth?* is clearly an article of the equivalent title in English, written by Parley P. Pratt and Samuel Brannan. Jones's pamphlet, both a translation and an elaboration, incorporates all of the contents and sequence of ideas of the source.

The major addition is a one-page quotation from the prophet Mormon, who abridged the ancient American records that became the Book of Mormon. It is not a true quotation, but rather a series of comments in the first person singular, following the Book of Mormon linguistic style, in which "Mormon" identifies himself and describes his background. Most of what Mormon "says" is consistent with information given throughout the Book of Mormon, but there are a few errors. For example, Mormon is quoted as saying that his forefathers had left Jerusalem in the time of King Zedekiah "about six hundred years before its destruction, and the capture of its inhabitants by Shalmaneser." No doubt the author meant to have Mormon say "six hundred years before Christ" and the "capture of its inhabitants by Nebuchadnezzar." Furthermore, it is anachronistic for Mormon to speak of Nebuchadnezzar, inasmuch as Mormon's forefathers, according to the Book of Mormon, left Jerusalem before the captivity.

WHAT IS MORMONISM?

THIS question is so oft repeated that we do not have time to answer everyone who asks it; and yet, we desire for everyone throughout the world, but especially in Wales, to know *what Mormonism is*; and since the purpose of this publication is to explain the excellence of this glorious plan, this PROPHET can answer for himself, and set the following things before his readers:—

“My descent is from the tribe of Joseph, who was sold to the Egyptians. My fathers came out of Jerusalem in the time of king Zedekiah, about six hundred years before its destruction, and the enslavement of its inhabitants by Shalmaneser: they brought with them the five books of Moses, and Elijah’s prophecy. After traveling in the wilderness for a year and a half, as they were led by the Lord their God, they landed on a continent [now called America]; and as it was a fine and excellent land in which to dwell, they began to work it, and settle in it, according to the commandment of the Lord their God; and while they were faithful, keeping the Lord’s commandments, and listening to the voice of his prophets who were in their midst, they prospered, increasing greatly; and when they transgressed against his commandments, he sent judgments upon them. At times they rose against one another, killing throngs on either side; at other times God raised up prophets to teach them, and they thrived. They lived thus for hundreds of years, keeping from age to age the history of the most ancient things of God’s dispensation to them, until they went into great decline, about four hundred years after the birth of Christ. And I, Mormon, was the last prophet who was in their midst, and they sought to take my life too; but I hid from them, and made an abridgment of the history of my ancestors from the plates I received from my father, and inscribed it on gold plates, according to God’s instruction to my fathers; and after finishing I gave the plates to my son Moroni to hide at the top of a high mountain, until the prophecies about my brethren were fulfilled, as God revealed that they would go into complete decline, until they lost all knowledge of their ancestors, and receive twofold from the Lord’s hand for their sins; and God revealed that he would visit them again in mercy in his own good time, and he made a promise to me, and to my fathers, that he would reveal this book to the Gentiles, and from them to the rest of my people in the latter days, and this when he was about to restore them to possession of the country, in order to civilize and settle them in this land which God had promised to my fathers; and let my brethren know for certain that when God reveals these oracles to men, he is extending his hand a second time to gather the remnant of his people from the four corners of the earth, the Jews to the land of Canaan, and the remnant of Israel on this continent. Let them know also that by revealing these things at that time he is beginning to fulfill his promise to our father Abraham. This is the banner which he will raise to the Gentiles from afar; at this time will he begin to build Zion in the latter days, by restoring the fulness of the eternal gospel to men. Therefore, let those who will be living on earth when these things are made known, know that the Lord began it, and he will finish it; yes, even though all the kings of the earth rise against him. The Lord swore in an oath to our fathers that he would not turn away his hand until it was finished.

And to Moses he says of Israel, Though you be pushed to the ends of heaven, the Lord your God will gather you from there; he will make with the house of Jacob a new covenant in the latter days, and will set his fear in their hearts, that they may not retreat from him ever more and for eternity; and he will be their king for ever, and his sanctuary shall be among them for ever. Blessed will be those who are alive when the Lord begins this work, if they obey him, but woe unto those who rebel against him."

This is a little of the history of the prophet Mormon, and his testimony; thousands of men that are alive now testify that he speaks the truth, that God has revealed the said oracles in this age, that he has begun this great work by giving the dispensation of the fulness of times to men, in which he gathers all things in Christ Jesus; that he has established his kingdom through divine power once again, according to the plan of his Son; and sent servants to invite all who will come to the wedding feast of the Lamb, for he is now preparing his bride for his coming, by her obedience first to the following conditions:

I. That there is but one true gospel or plan revealed under heaven among men, whereby a sinner may be reconciled with God, sanctified, and prepared to have a part in the "adoption, that is the redemption of the body," to enjoy the company of the firstborn, and all the perfected saints; when they will reign with their Lord for a thousand years, and thereafter may dwell eternally in the presence of Him who is a consuming fire, and the eternal burning of all imperfections. That this plan is perfect, like its Author, conceived in the divine council before the world existed, that it is like its Author unchangeable, functioning according to that design in all its parts, and its movements bearing the same fruits, or answering such purposes in every age in the world, in which it has been, is, or will be. That Jesus Christ, who is the true Son of God, was born of woman, and satisfied divine justice by offering himself on the cross as a blameless offering acceptable to God, and rose from the grave, according to the scriptures, in the fulness of the times preordained in the early council, and thereby arranged or opened the way, and established that perfect plan, that he could not have established any other without making one or the other superfluous, and therefore imperfect, and that this plan is to be believed and obeyed in all things, according to his design; that not one iota, not one assertion can be changed or rejected, nor anything eliminated from it, without its being imperfect, and thereby ineffective in bringing "life and immortality to light."

II. That this same perfect plan was revealed by the good Creator and Father of mankind, to his children in the beginning, by himself, by angels sent from him, through visions, the spirit of prophecy, and revelations in all manner of ways.

III. That this same perfect plan has been corrupted and perverted by men, in many ages of the world to such an extent that it became necessary for its author, the Creator and Sustainer of the world and its inhabitants, to restore it, through such means, and in the same manner as it was first established. Hence the necessity for the several dispensations given to the world, in different ages, as is proved in the holy book.

IV. That Jesus Christ, the Messiah, did after his resurrection appear, and minister to the Jews in Palestine, to the tribe of Joseph in America, to the remnant of Israel in the north country, and to the spirits in prison, who had died previously without being offered this plan, 1 Peter iii, 19, 20; iv, 6. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, which must hear my voice." Not the Gentiles, for they did not hear his voice; they did not call anyone but the seed of Abraham *sheep*; the others were *dogs*, and that he established this perfect and glorious plan in those parts of the world.

V. That the Gentiles were partakers of this plan, some years after Christ rose on high, not by his personal ministry, but through his servants, and by the Holy Ghost, which revealed to them his truth, his resurrection, and his elevation to the right hand of the Almighty as Prince and Savior.

VI. That that perfect plan has been changed and corrupted by men to such an extent, for hundreds of years, that it is no longer to be found in its power, its purity, and its essential glory among Jews, Gentiles, or Israelites; and this is the cause of all the different divisions and sects that overwhelm the world because men are seeking to rediscover that plan; and, having failed, they make ones of their own as similar to it as they can, and give it that name, denying its essential power, according to the prophecies about the latter days.

VII. That this same perfect plan has again been restored to the earth, and established in this age, in the same manner, and by the same means, as in every previous dispensation; viz, by the voice of God in heaven, by angelic ministry, visions, and revelations from the Lord. This is a new dispensation, not a new plan, but a complete restoration of the original plan, namely the one which was purchased in the eternal council, which was established by the patriarchs, the prophets, by Christ, and the apostles, and this last time, that is the eleventh hour, to bring in "the latter-day glory," "the fulness of the Gentiles," "the restoration of Judah," and "the remnant of Israel," yes, that "the times of the restoration of all things" that God spoke through the lips of all his holy prophets ever might come, to prepare the way for the second coming of the Messiah to reign triumphantly over all his enemies in glory, for a thousand years.

Now we shall show the first principles in the fulness of the eternal gospel in this age, as in every previous age, which are as follows:—

First,—To believe in Jesus Christ, as Savior and the atoning one, crucified and resurrected.

Second,—To repent of all their sins, and leave them, walking a new life, doing justice to all men, and serving God.

Third (but not first or second),—To be buried in water and resurrected, by one of God's chosen servants, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. See Acts ii, 38, and xxii, 16; 1 Peter iii, 21, &c.

Fourth,—To receive the Holy Ghost, through the laying on of hands by the elders of The Church of Jesus Christ of *Latter-day Saints*. See Acts viii, 17, 18, 20, and xix, 6; 1 Tim. iv, 14; 2 Tim. i, 6; Heb. vi, 1, 2.

Fifth,—To believe in, and pray to enjoy the spiritual gifts, and the good blessings, that were enjoyed by those who obeyed this heavenly plan in former ages; such as, speaking wisdom—speaking knowl-

edge—miraculous faith—the gift of healing, and being healed, through anointing with holy oil in the name of the Lord, the prayer of faith, and the laying on of hands. See James v, 14, 15; Mark xvi, 18. Also, to endeavor to gain the gift of prophecy, discerning of spirits, speaking with strange tongues, interpreting the same, receiving revelations from God, angelic ministry, the company of good spirits from the eternal world in visions, &c., and all other blessings that are promised in the scriptures to the children of God. See 1 Cor. xii, and xiv, 1, 5, 18, 39; Acts ii, 39, and xix, 6; Mark xvi, 17, 18; Eph. iv, 11—14, &c.

Sixth,—All who profess this plan, should live in holiness and righteousness, praying with every prayer, as the Spirit lends them expression; do good to all, especially to the family of faith; pray for those who do them harm and persecute them; disassociate themselves from all the Babel-forms, and every form of unsound doctrine, remembering that such things corrupt good morals: “Come out of Babylon, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”

And last,—Those who come into the bond of this new covenant, and the fulness of the gospel, should watch and pray, lest they fall into temptation, but be ready, waiting for the coming of the Son of Man; for he will come suddenly and immediately on the children of darkness, when they say, Peace, peace; when they, after all the warning, as in the days of Noah, are eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, and casting the evil day far away from them; therefore, the Son of Man will come in such an hour as they think not.

This is the correct depiction of the evangelical plan according to the scriptures, and as the Latter-day Saints have it, and all that is contrary to this comes from evil; and if anyone should come to you, professing to be servants of God, without bringing this doctrine—yes, “though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than these things, let him be accused.” As John says, so say we—“If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.” We are frequently accused of preaching a new gospel, throwing these scriptures in our faces, yes, by some as conscientious as David was, when he gave the verdict on himself; and it was not more appropriate for Nathan to say to him, “Thou art the man,” than it would be for us to say the same thing to these our accusers. And whosoever takes the trouble to compare our profession with the scriptures will see clearly that it is a completely false accusation, and that it is the eternal plan we have—that it is our accusers who are preaching new gospels, if in fact they are gospels. Dear Welshman, do not believe them, without looking for yourself; for some of these prefer to see you lose your life, than see the hope of their profit fading; and then they shout loudly, Away with these people, they speak against our “great goddess,” whom our fathers have worshiped.