

October 24, 2011

Mormon Temple Ward
Taipei City

Hello Sister R and Sister W,

How are you? Remember me? Tony from Canada. I left on Monday October 17 for home and arrived safely. It's been about a week now and I am still coping with a little bit of jetlag. It's odd because I didn't experience any jetlag when I arrived in Taipei back on October 5. Oh well. It must be the cooler weather in Toronto that is partly to blame.

Thank you for our talks when I was there. I came by the worship service on Sunday October 16 but didn't see you there. I wanted to let you know that I had found one of the answers to my questions.

Let's recap.

1] The Book of Mormon can bring you nearer to God than any other book?

"I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book."

Neither you nor Sister W could mention one Book of Mormon precept that could bring one nearer to God than a precept in any other book. Some critical precepts, as taught in the Gospel Principles training manual – to bring one near to God – are not even found in the Book of Mormon (Word of Wisdom, Celestial Marriage, Temple work, etc) – I checked the book's index in the back and couldn't find these.

2] Nephi baptized himself?

Nephi went into the water alone and baptized himself (3 Nephi 19:11-12) and then Jesus appeared to them later. It is unclear why Nephi needed to be baptized twice. He was already preaching the gospel and ordaining people before Jesus supposedly came to America (3 Nephi 7:25). He had to already have been baptized at least once to perform these roles. Then, after Nephi was baptized, he baptizes the other 11 disciples again (3 Nephi 19:12-13). Remember that the Book of Mormon says a functional church existed prior to his supposed appearance to the Americas. Since it says that the more righteous

people were spared death, it's easy to see that they are referring to baptized members of a church. So it is unclear why the 12 had to be baptized again and for them in turn to baptize the multitude after Jesus departed (3 Nephi 11:21). . You figure they were already baptized members of the church too.

3] Heavenly Father has a perfected body?

In the Nature of God section – “God is our Heavenly Father. We are his children. He has a body of flesh and bone that is glorified and perfected.”

I figured out what *perfected* means when I looked at the other booklet you gave me – The Plan of Salvation. “Three days later, His spirit was reunited with His glorified, perfected body that could no longer die” (page 19, referring to Jesus). “Resurrection – After physical death, the reuniting of the spirit with the perfected physical body of flesh and bones” (page 22, referring to people in general).

So apparently the Mormon version of Heavenly Father also died and resurrected to get a *perfected* body like Jesus.

I found this confirmed with a teaching in one of your church's publications I found online. The 1997 version of Gospel Principles. I found out later that there is now a 2009 version.

Let me quote the 1997 version because it has one key point:

“When you climb up a ladder, you must begin at the bottom, and ascend step by step, until you arrive at the top; and so it is with the principles of the Gospel—you must begin with the first, and go on until you learn all the principles of exaltation. But it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil [died] before you will have learned them. It is not all to be comprehended in this world; it will be a great work to learn our salvation and exaltation even beyond the grave. **This is the way our Heavenly Father became God.** It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the character of God. ... He was once a man like us; ... God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ himself did” (chapter 47, page 305).

This **bolded** teaching has been removed from the 2009 version of Gospel Principles – most likely because the LDS Church does not want people to know what it teaches until they are more deeply involved as a member. In orthodox Christianity, Heavenly Father is NOT an exalted man. He has always been God.

We *don't* worship a man who became a God.

4] A vengeful Messiah?

According to the Book of Mormon, severe destruction occurred at the moment of Christ's death. Darkness persisted for 3 days and there was an earthquake lasting 3 hours. Cities are reported to have been destroyed (about 16 cities are mentioned by name. Believe it or not they even named one of these cities "Jerusalem.") The temple veil was not rent in twain. In fact, this very important event is not even mentioned.

That's quite a huge difference with the Bible. There was one momentary earthquake in the Bible. Darkness lasted only 3 hours (Luke 23:44). No cities were destroyed and people were not slain. The only person that died was Jesus.

Do you remember the words of Jesus while he was on the cross? "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Do you also remember when a few of his disciples wanted a village destroyed because they had rejected His preaching? "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village" (Luke 9:51-56).

Do you notice this major difference between the two Jesus Christs?

5] The Fall of Adam through multiple sins?

I found this error in the booklet and also in the Book of Mormon.

Page 18 – definition of The Fall – "Because Adam and Eve, the first humans, disobeyed God's commandmentss, they were separated from His presence (this separation is also called spiritual death) and became mortal (subject to physical death)." Notice the s (for plural).

Page 19 – definition of Spiritual Death – "Separation from God as a result of disobeying His commandmentss." Notice the s (for plural).

Alma 12:31 – "Wherefore, he gave unto them commandments unto men, they having first transgressed the first commandmentss as to things which are temporal, and becoming as Gods, knowing good from evil ..." Notice the s (for plural).

This is against biblical teaching. The Fall is the result of transgressing only ONE commandment (singular). And humans are already separated from God's presence before they commit any sin because of the Fall.

6] Christ crucified 10 days before the Passover?

The Book of Mormon was off by about 10 days. This is very important because it reveals these people were not descendants of the Jews, who were meticulous in keeping dates. Even study our Calendar today. The Jews still know when to celebrate their feasts (Yom Kippur is in September).

3 Nephi 8:3, 5 – “And the people began to look with great earnestness for the sign which had been given by the prophet Samuel, the Lamanite, yea, for the time that there should be darkness for the space of three days over the face of the land. And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, **in the first month, on the fourth day of the month**, there arose a great storm, such an one as never had been known in all the land.”

What is the significance of this? Well, Jesus was crucified on the Feast of Passover. “In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's Passover” (Leviticus 23:5).

When I checked further, feast days are not even mentioned in the Book of Mormon – leading one to easily see that these people were not descendants of Jacob.

Summary and conclusion

I came by the worship service on Sunday and also managed to attend the Gospel Principles training on chapter 38 (I believe). They were talking about eternal families. The worship services are very very sombre. Who died? You should visit a Pentecostal worship service one day. You can tell the huge difference in joy and excitement as they praise and worship God.

In the second section, they spoke about eternal life and eternal marriage. Apparently in Mormon theology single people do NOT inherit eternal life because eternal life is reserved for people who become gods and goddesses in a temple marriage. I asked the person sitting next to me if this was true and they confirmed it (it was the president (?) and his wife).

Marriage was not the goal of Jesus or his disciples: “And there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it let him receive it” (Matthew 19:12).

Paul taught marriage and singleness is both gifts from God: “For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn ... Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Are thou loosed from

a wife? seek not a wife. But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned” (1 Corinthians 7:7-9, 27-28).

I already have a testimony that the Bible is the Word of God but the Book of Mormon has a different spirit to it (it lacks feast days, geography, archaeology. etc) – it is not a volume comparable to the Bible when one reads both carefully. When I read the first few chapters of Gospel Principles and glanced through the rest, the manual contains a different Jesus and a different gospel. It was sad to see how you have departed from the biblical truths.

A few days after arriving back in Toronto the local missionaries here contacted me. I will also discuss these topics with them too.

Thank you,

Tony