

REALITY QUEST

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THE BOOK OF MORMON

Through honest research, an open mind, and many hours of contemplation I can make the following claim which I maintain to be the absolute truth about *The Book of Mormon*:

The book is the work of Joseph Smith and some others who believed in what he was trying to do in the religious world. There were no gold plates, Angel Moroni, or Urim and Thummim, i.e., the "seer stones" Joseph Smith reportedly used to translate the gold plates with.

I would never have questioned the integrity of *The Book of Mormon* had I not come across the suppression of truth that the LDS Church perpetuates in order to protect the facts about the origin of the *Book of Abraham* found in the *Pearl of Great Price* of the Mormon scripture. Any honest individual can not deny the fact that the *Book of Abraham* was the work of Joseph Smith. If the matter was taken to a court of law where an unbiased jury of men and women analyzed the facts, there could be no other conclusion but what the overwhelming evidence would show; that Joseph Smith did not get any papyri from ancient mummies which contained the writings of some of the greatest figures in religious history.

For years I tried to hang on to *The Book of Mormon* and its sacredness as one of the greatest literary religious works that could ever be shared with mortal men and women. However, my blindness could not be supported by my intense desire to know truth and reality. Though there are millions who believe in it, the fact remains that there are millions more who believe in the *Koran* (Islam), the *Baghavid Gita* //sp// (Hindu), the *Torah* (Jewish), the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, or more recently, *The Seven Signs*, written and produced by none other than the martyr, David Koresh.

The years will pass, and each sect will believe in what they want and see only what they wish to see. Because of the religious blinders that most will wear, the bigotry that exists between them will continue to produce wars, famines, and all manner of vicissitudes.

When will the human race wake up and remove the blinders that keep them from finding love, tolerance, and true happiness?

There is a logical reason why Joseph Smith did what he did. I have written a book entitled, *Deceived Or Be Deceived*. I hope the work will help the reader understand the human's need to have religion and certain other individual's need to give it to them.

The next few issues of Reality Quest will be taken from my book. It will show how I could have remained deceived or been a deceiver of others myself. After the book, I will outline a comprehensive study of *The Book of Mormon* which will leave the honest reader convinced that there is no other conclusion to be made but that which I have postulated.

I do not want to ridicule one's right to believe in what ever myth they might need to experience their happiness. However, as mentioned at the beginning of "*What I Know*", I do not believe that others should ridicule my beliefs as being "false" when I can prove theirs to be so and they have no shred of evidence that prove that mine are.

In other words, I'm hoping that I can remove the blinders of any honest individual that he or she might help create peace in this world by seeing the whole road and not only the middle which their masters force them to focus on.

I can almost hear the lonely voices of many sages long since buried in the world that they tried so hard to comprehend, "Good-luck, Chris!"

DECEIVED OR BE DECEIVED

CHAPTER ONE

Religious Deception

Since the beginning of time man has feared the unknown. Death was one of these "unknowns" which humans experienced regularly. The death of a relative or friend causes a lot of emotional stress on an individual. Upon experiencing the death of a close acquaintance, it is a natural desire to seek to be comforted. Religions are formed and based on the giving of this comfort.

Most religions are formed according to the general beliefs and cultures of the people who begin them. Religions also disappear when the people and the culture who begin them change or cease to exist. However, most ancient religions never really cease to exist, but merely evolve into their present day counterparts.

Religion is an evolutionary process. As culture changes, so do the religious beliefs and practices of the people. When a culture is changed from its original foundations, so does its religions. A good example of this process is the ancient Egyptian religions which are rarely practiced today. However, there have been many modern religions based on the foundation which these ancient religions built.

The leaders of all religions claim to be chosen by unseen individuals or forces. For want of a better term, the name "God" shall be used in this text to describe these unseen beings who religious followers believe give their power and authority to mortal men and/or women.

Any attempt to uncover the deception of all religions would fill many volumes of written work. Therefore, we shall consider some of the means used by the leaders of a few Christian faiths who hold their followers in subjection. This does not mean that other faiths not mentioned herein use any less deceptive means.

The Christian faith is based on the reverence of a man called Jesus in the English language. Most of the information about Jesus is taken from the *New Testament* of what Christians accept as the *Holy Bible*. Most, if not all, Christian leaders claim that this *Bible* is the "Word of God"-the words of an invisible being to all but a few who make claims of being *his* personally chosen leaders. To determine what deceit has been used to make such an extraordinary claim, it would be wise to examine this claim based on actual facts known. (However, even this examination of fact would prove difficult to accomplish owing to the understanding that there exists very few *true* facts, which are usually second hand hearsay and all that is available for study by the student of truth.)

The Bible begins with five books which have been generally accepted as the books which Moses contributed to this Jewish historical text. Now let's give Moses the benefit of the doubt and assume that he did talk with God. However, an elementary student could figure out that if Moses had actually written these books himself, he would not have referred to himself as "Moses" throughout the text, but he would have used the pronoun "I".

Exodus 2:11 : *"And it came to pass in those days when Moses was grown..."*

Leviticus 11:1 : *"And the Lord spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying to them,..."*

Numbers 1:1 : *"And the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness..."*

The "fact" is, these first five books were written hundreds of years after Moses' death. The Jews kept an oral history of their early beginnings, and as close as any biblical scholar can tell, these oral histories were finally written down sometime during or after the reign of King Solomon.

Who were the actual men who wrote this history, or in other words, the first five books of Moses? They certainly weren't Moses, neither were they God. Therefore, to assume that these books contain the words of God or Moses, is a false misconception. At the time these writers decided to write this oral history, the Jewish faith was in all kind of chaos. This is evident by the later writings of the biblical prophets whose message was nothing less than a chastisement of the wickedness and corruption of the Jewish leaders and those who followed them. In "fact", the sacrificial ordinances which meant so much to the Jews, and eventually the Christians, were condemned profusely by the prophet Isaiah:

"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of feed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who has required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. (Isaiah 1:11-14)

Isaiah goes on to tell the people to forget about their religious ordinances and do good by taking care of the poor and needy- true religious principles. Had the Jews listened to this prophet of God, perhaps they wouldn't have been sacrificing poor, innocent animals at the time when this Jesus began to tell them not to. Who told them to kill the innocent things anyway? Moses certainly couldn't have. During the passing down of the oral history of the Jews, some zealous leader interpolated his own ideas to keep his followers in fear and subjection. To the civilized man it seems ridiculous to believe that the slaughter of innocent animals could "cleanse the sins" and bad behavior of man; and to claim that these sacrifices of innocence were symbolic of the sacrifice of an innocent man for one's sins is another idea a zealous leader made up to keep his followers in subjection. Like Jesus, Isaiah was ignored, but correct.

One of the most startling evidences that the supposed God of the Bible has proved himself unworthy of the respect of mankind is in the great genocide, i.e., the killing of men, women, and children, which he allegedly condoned and commanded.

In Deuteronomy 2:34, it is reported that the followers of this merciless God accomplished the command they were given by their God through their leader, Moses:

"...And we took all his cities at that time, and utterly destroyed the men, women, and the little ones, of every city, we left none to remain..."

Throughout the Old Testament such atrocities are commonplace. According to the Bible, the people justified this genocide by thinking of it as "ethnic cleansing" (religious cleansing might be a more appropriate term.)

It is astounding to no end to realize that a civilized society can justify the actions of these ancient peoples and condemn the actions of more recent peoples who did the same thing for the same reasons.

Adolf Hitler can well be described as the "modern-day Moses". His intentions of killing countless "men, women, and little ones", were to cleanse society of those he thought would corrupt the greatness of the German people. Being a Christian, Adolf assumed he was doing his God a service by killing the Jews who had persecuted his Lord. Why was it okay for the God of the Bible and his Moses to perform this mass genocide, and not okay for Hitler?

The Crusades of the Christian armies prove to have had no other purpose than to eliminate those who did not worship the same God as they did. The Moslem wars existed for the same reason. More innocent "men, women, and little ones" have been massacred in the name of religion throughout the history of the human species than for any other cause. And the massacres continue to this day in many parts of the world.

Many great philosophers and thinkers have concluded the same things which have been presented in this book. Thomas Paine, an American Founding Father wrote:

"The most detestable wickedness, the most horrid cruelties, and the greatest miseries that have afflicted the human race have had their origin in this thing called revelation, or revealed religion. It has been the most dishonorable belief against the character of the Divinity, the most destructive to morality and the peace and happiness of man, that ever was propagated since man began to exist. It is better, far better, that we admitted, if it were possible, a thousand devils to roam at large, and to preach publicly the doctrine of devils, if there were any such, than that we permitted one such imposter and monster as Moses, Joshua, Samuel, and the Bible prophets, to come with the pretended word of God in his mouth, and have credit among us..." (Thomas Paine, Age of Reason, Part I, p.6)

"Of all the systems of religion that ever were invented, there is none more derogatory to the Almighty, more unedifying to man, more repugnant to reason, and more contradictory in itself, than this thing called Christianity. (Ibid, p 181)

"To charge the commission of acts upon the Almighty, which, in their own nature, and by every rule of moral justice, are crimes, as all assassination is, and more especially the assassination of infants, is matter of serious concern. The Bible tells us, that those assassinations were done by the express command of God. To believe, therefore, the Bible to be true, we must unbelieve all our belief in the moral justice of

God; for wherein could crying or smiling infants offend? And to read the Bible without horror, we must undo everything that is tender, sympathizing, and benevolent in the heart of man. Speaking for myself, if I had no other evidence that the Bible is fabulous than the sacrifice I must make to believe it to be true, that alone would be sufficient to determine my choice. (Ibid., p 76-77)

It is quite simple to understand how easy it would be for great mistakes to occur in the passing of stories from one generation to another. As children, most of us have played the "Pass It On" game. A sensible sentence is given to one child who whispered it to the next until the last child, who then tells everyone what he or she heard. All most always the original sentence given is so changed that it is very difficult to determine what was really said in the first place. That which is reported in the Old Testament as the writings of Moses could very well be the corrupted thoughts and stories of old Jews who simply heard them around the fire on cold nights from other old Jews who were playing "pass it on".

It is unknown, but many have made their own postulations, where and how the rest of the books in the *Old Testament* came to be. There have been countless explanations by so called scholars, but their disagreements outweigh their truths. However, it is somewhat well known about the formation and history of the *New Testament*.

The *New Testament* is only accepted as authentic and religiously important by the Christian sects. The Jews think the *New Testament* is blasphemous and absurd. When one comes to the knowledge of truth regarding the beginnings of this part of the Christian Bible, they might be apt to agree with the Jews.

About 400 A.D., or there about, no one really knows exactly when, a Roman government official by the name of Constantine began a reformation among the Christian peoples who lived under his jurisdiction. Constantine did not do this out of love for God, or the Christian. It was simply a political move on his part, owing to the fact that most of his subjects were Christian.

The story goes that Constantine called for a Christian bishop when he was on his death bed. He wanted to be baptized, so that if the Christians were right, he would also be saved. (Another good political move on his part.) When this reformation began, a group of popular, rich Christian leaders got together and decided that the best way to bring the church together was to organize a world wide (catholic) Christian faith and put together some writings which the leaders could read to the people, (because most of the people were illiterate), to keep them in the faith.

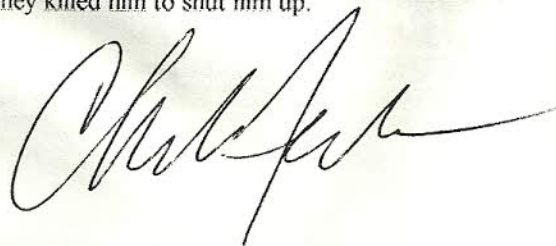
The first part of the New Testament contains what have become known as "*The Gospels*". These books are reported to be eye witness accounts of the life and works of Jesus. The books were suppose to be written about 70 A.D., an estimated 40 years after the presumed death of Jesus. (The reader of the Bible is to assume that the eye-witnesses had incredible memories.) Like all religious writings, no one knows the true circumstances surrounding their (*The Gospels*) beginnings.

It would seem that such important writings would be strongly safeguarded by the newly formed Catholic Church. In "fact", it would appear logical that all the writings of the *New Testament* should receive the same special treatment. Why, therefore, are there not available to the public these original, most sacred writings? Could it be possible that none exist? Or is it possible that if the documents were open to public scrutiny, we would discover that the original documents were written in the same handwriting, and therefore, could not possibly have been written by different authors as the *New Testament* suggests?

The "fact" is, they don't exist; and those that do, were written by the few men who were in charge of the reformation and put the *New Testament* together in the first place.

A intuitive person might ask the question: "If scripture as the word of God was so important, then why are there no writings by Jesus himself?" Could Jesus write? According to the *New Testament*, he was a poor carpenter's son, and it is a known "fact" that very few people were literate at that time, especially those of the lower classes.

Incidentally, but not surprising, the Jewish leaders at that time depended on the ignorance and illiteracy of the people in order to continue their control over them. The scriptures were only read by the members of the Priesthood and only in the appropriate places and at the appointed times. Perhaps had the scriptures been available to all, given that all could read, someone might have uncovered the deception of the "spiritual elite". Alas, it appears that Jesus could read, and he did uncover the corruption of the Jewish church and its leaders. They killed him to shut him up.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to the author of the text. The signature is cursive and fluid, with a prominent initial 'C'.