

REALITY QUEST

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(...continued from last week)

The story of the life of Jesus has proven to be one of the most effective catalysts for modern day religions. As mentioned before, it is interesting to note that nothing at all has ever been discovered which has been written by the man named Jesus. Though countless men, and some women, have taken it upon themselves to be the authority of his life and actions, nothing can be found which has been attributed to the writings of Jesus himself.

The *New Testament* in the *Bible* is not, however, the only source of ancient scripture which contains narratives about the life of Jesus. The *Nag Hammadi* scrolls were discovered and were found to contain a quite different picture about the teachings and actions of this interesting man. Nevertheless, upon their discovery, the world-wide Christian leaders banded together and got most of the documents suppressed. This also happened when the *Dead Sea Scrolls* were discovered in Qumran. However, from that which was released, one is able to determine that there exists many different opinions on the life and works of the man, Jesus of Nazareth, than those presented in *The New Testament*.

During the time that the New Testament was being put together, there were many different sects of Christianity. Some of these sects were unorthodox and claimed that the new Catholic Church which was being formed was corrupt. These fundamentalist groups claimed that the original doctrine and teachings of Jesus Christ had been changed to conform to the ideas and doctrines of the rich and powerful Christian leaders who put themselves up as heads of the Catholic Church. These groups claimed, that when the original apostles were all killed, the church was thrown into chaos and each local Christian leader took upon himself to be God's spokesman on earth, thus creating many different Christian sects. Over time, these unorthodox Christian groups were destroyed by or assimilated into the Catholic Church. Consequently, during the Christian Crusades, so was everyone else who didn't believe in Christianity.

Upon investigation and studying the *Nag Hammadi* scripture, which was the scripture of some of the Gnostic sects of poor Christians who were cast out and rejected by their richer counterparts, and other modern-day religious discoveries, one soon realizes that the stories and ideas presented in the *New Testament* are only the opinions of the men who put it together. It is again interesting to note that none of the books of the *New Testament* can be factually traced to the author whose name they bear. The many arguments which have taken place and are continued by spurious biblical scholars, who disagree according to their personal religious dogmas and biases on exactly who wrote many of the books and when they were actually written, generate more confusion than the intended help they promote.

As mentioned above, it would seem logical that the modern Catholic Church would have in its possession the original writings; and that simply opening them up to public view, would challenge all heresy and false assumptions and put to rest any doubts of the veracity of the *New Testament* accounts. The unveiling of the original documents, if any such really existed, would throw so much doubt upon the veracity of the scriptures and modern day dogma, that the Catholic leaders would be forced to suppress them to keep their Church together.

The suppression and/or changing of original documents is one of the ways in which religious leaders deceive their followers and keep their "sheep" in subjection. The reason why they do this is not bad according to the leaders. As the age of enlightenment proceeds, the morals of society seem to dwindle and the leaders of churches believe they know why. People become too smart to be blindly led without investigation and questioning. Faith has been replaced with reason and the desire to know the truth for oneself. Without the fear of being punished by God for sexual immorality, for example, natural instincts take over and cause the social ills of promiscuity. Because religious leaders know the knowledge of the

truth would cast doubt and controversy on the things which they preach today about so called "sexual sins", they simply take out of reach all things which could cause doubt in their explanations of "God's will" for the sheep which they have supposedly been commissioned to watch over.

A good example of the above deception can be found in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons). In order to be a good member in this church, one must abstain from the use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages. If one is found to use these substances, they can no longer attend temple ceremonies which is the pinnacle of Mormon religious achievement.

When the church was first organized by Joseph Smith Jr. in the 1830s, there was no such "commandment" for church members. The counsel was given to them as a "*Word of Wisdom*", which was subsequently given to them for their own temporal well being and not for disqualification for church ordinances. The history of this church is reportedly taken from the hand written journals of their leader, Joseph Smith. In the original writings of Mr. Smith, the following is found:

(Dated June 1, 1844, shortly before Joseph Smith's death)

"Then went to John P. Greene's and paid him and another brother \$200. Drank a glass of beer at Moessers. Called at William Clayton's..." (Millennial Star, Vol.23, page 720).

In the modern-day History of The Church it reads:

"Then went to John P. Greene's and paid him and another brother \$200. Called at William Clayton's..." (History of the Church Vol.6, pg.424)

The Millennial Star Vol.21, page 283 reads:

"It was reported to me that some of the brethren had been drinking whisky that day in violation of the word of wisdom. I called the brethren in and investigated the case and was satisfied no evil had been done, and gave them a couple of dollars, with the directions to replenish the bottle to stimulate them in the fatigues of their sleepless journey."

In the modern version, the words in bold print have been totally removed.

These are just two of thousands of changes which the modern Mormon Church has made to cover up the truth of the original history and doctrine of their church. (It's ironic that Joseph Smith would be considered a "jack mormon", and wouldn't be allowed into full fellowship of his own church, if he were alive today.)

Besides these historic changes, the Mormon Church continues to keep original documents locked up in vaults where very few have access to them. The leaders of this church know, as did the leaders of the original Catholic Church, that if Mormons really knew the truth behind the history of their doctrine and scriptures, they would loose faith in the teachings which are presented to them in modern times.

Most religious leaders, as well as many intelligent men, believe it is in the best interest of society to organize religions on the faith of mankind so as to better institute moral laws which bring peace. In other words, it is better that the weak minded not know the truth, for perhaps if they did, it would cause them to rebel against instituted authority and chaos would prevail.

Though there are many sincere religious leaders, most leaders bask in their authority over men. It also provides them with financial security, and since religion is suppose to be for the good of all, why not make a living from it? Nevertheless, these leaders will never admit to the facts presented in this book. In fact, if a religious leader found out his or her "sheep" were reading the truth, they would mock them and pronounce certain doom upon their heads for reading this "inspiration of the devil".

Magicians had the same idea, but they called it illusion and misdirection.

CHAPTER TWO

The End Justifies The Means

In order to help others find the truth about their own religion, which in turn, I felt, would better help them understand themselves, I decided to form my own religion in the same way that many before me had.

As I began the formation of my religion, inspiration seemed to flow through every fiber of my body. I soon realized that when ever one focuses strongly on any particular undertaking, he or she acquires extraordinary means to accomplish that which they set out to do. This is the case in athletics, the arts, education, business, and practically anything.

Because I was dealing with the things of God, I assumed I was receiving direct inspiration from Him. Yes, I was receiving revelation. If only prophets of God received these heavenly manifestations called "revelation", then I was a prophet; and what ever I did, God sanctioned. This illusion only lasted a while, until I came back down to earth and realized my "revelation" was coming from my "strong mind", and not from an illusionary God. However, I knew that millions, yea billions, of people were still very much convinced that revelation was real, (I wasn't about to pop anyone's bubble), so I proceeded with my religious formation under the auspices of the "Priesthood of God".

In the first book of *The Book of Mormon*, a holy scripture accepted by Mormons as a second Bible, (The Mormons believe *The Book of Mormon* is more correct than the *Bible*), a story is told about a man named Nephi who is commanded to kill a drunk man, and by deception, steal some plates of brass which were of great worth to Nephi and his family. Nephi justifies his actions because he was doing it for a righteous reason. The "*Spirit of the Lord*" commanded him, and he obeyed.

Likewise, in the early days of the Mormon Church, many members and leaders disobeyed laws of society in order to perform what they believed to be the righteous commands of God. John Taylor, who was the President and prophet of this church for sometime, as well as many other early Mormons, willfully defied the laws of the land for the sake of their religious convictions when they practiced polygamy after society decided it was not proper and established laws forbidding its practice. (It is debatable if society was correct in their opinion and abuse of the constitutional rights of the Mormon people.) Because members of this church are taught that the LDS Church is the only church which is sanctioned by God on earth, then it follows that the leaders of this church are the only ones who truly understand God's will for mankind. Therefore, the laws of God, received by *His* chosen leaders, always supersede those established by ordinary men. Any means which is used under the guidance of the "*Spirit of God*", or instructed by one of his so-called "*prophets*" is always justified as being God's will.

It's quite humorous to note that in the Mormon faith the members believe that God, "*will never allow one of their prophets to mislead us*", and who told them this: why, one of their prophets, of course.

It is this mentality which many members of this faith, and many other faiths, have used to justify their actions, when the same actions appear wrong to the rest of society. Is it the fault of the member of this sect of faith when he or she thinks they are doing God's will when they deceive, hurt, or even kill others? Or could it not be the fallacy of the religious teachings and examples of their leaders?

It appears to be very dangerous when a religious group sets itself up as the only chosen people of God and indoctrinates its members into believing this with all their hearts. If the members of this group are convinced that they indeed belong to this elite group of humans, then their actions are the only actions sanctioned by God, and therefore, they can do no wrong.

Because the modern day LDS Church seemed corrupt in my eyes, I assumed that they had left the original teachings and dogma of the early church and its leaders, and that I could do as the earlier leaders of the Church had done. (It did seem ironic to me, however, that the early leaders of the Church taught the members to obey the laws of the land, when they openly disobeyed it on numerous occasions.) This perception, or deception, led me to justify any action which I felt "*The Spirit*" had inspired me to do.

My parents and the leaders of my church taught me to read the scriptures and abide by the precepts taught therein. They also praised the courage and actions of the earlier Mormon leaders. Because of my intense study of the scriptures and my investigation into the lives of the early Mormon leaders, I was indoctrinated into thinking that deception was good, as long as its end was good also. (Most "strong minds" swear to this concept.)

I wasn't the only non-fundamentalist modern day church member who believed this way; Paul H. Dunn was a very prolific and respected Mormon General Authority who used deception in order to promulgate what he saw as good principles. He was a very popular writer and orator in the Mormon church. He based a lot of his stories and writings on his experiences as a major league baseball player and a courageous war hero. It was found out that he neither played professional baseball, or saw very much combat duty. He certainly was not the only Christian leader that has done this, but he is one of the few who has been caught.

Many disillusioned Mormons have used the principle of the "end justifies the means", (when God speaks to you through revelation), to do society many wrongs. Aaron LeBaron, the Laffertys, and Adam Swap are just a few examples of violent acts being justified by way of Mormon dogma, i.e., "God commanded me to". To be fair, the LDS Church is not the only organized religion to have problems with

over zealous members. All religions have the same problems, but this author is more familiar with the church I belonged to.

Even though the LDS Church counsels its members to obey the laws of the land, the scriptures which they accept as the word of God, and the examples of early leaders, will always be an acceptable means of justification to do as "*the Spirit commandeth*". Perhaps if the members really knew the truth about their church, its scriptures, and the history behind them, then they might think twice before using them to justify their actions.

Having justified in my mind the use of deception in writing scripture and presenting it as the word of God, I proceeded to produce my "*revelation from the mouth of God*".

CHAPTER THREE

The Book of Joseph

There is no need to explain in detail the accepted history of *The Book of Mormon*. Joseph Smith claimed to have received instructions from an Angel of God to go to a mount, dig up some gold plates, translate them, and give the Angel back the gold plates after he was done. From a very young age, all Latter Day Saints are taught this accepted history. Thousands of Mormon missionaries are currently swarming the globe with the message of *The Book of Mormon* and the prophet, Joseph Smith.

After my disillusionment of the Church, I could not accept any thing I had learned since childhood from church leaders, or my parents, as actual fact. During my investigation of the Church, I came to the conclusion that Joseph Smith, with the help of a selected few, wrote and organized *The Book of Mormon*, *Pearl of Great Price*, and *Doctrine and Covenants*, the canon of scripture for Mormonism. The preceding statement does not come as a surprise to the intellectual world. Many investigations and works have been done which prove my conclusion to be the case. However, these works weren't sufficient proof for me to convince myself that I had been duped for so long.

Its human nature to assume that, "I can't be deceived." It's this pride that blinds so many of us to real truth. When ever I came across a work which was not sanctioned by the Church, I simply would not read it and would automatically cast it off as an attempt by an enemy of the Church to discredit it. Ironically, the same scenario occurred many times when I served as a young Mormon missionary to Buenos Aires, Argentina. It would frustrate me when the people who I asked to read *The Book of Mormon* would cast it off as false, because that's what their religious leaders told them to do. Little did I know, that I had long frustrated myself with the same kind of ignorance.

My search for the truth started after studying and investigating the Mark Hoffman bombing incident. Mr. Hoffman was a well known historical buff who became disillusioned with the Church and used his knowledge and access to church authorities to commit fraud and murder. Mr. Hoffman was well aware of the fact that Joseph Smith made up *The Book of Mormon*, because he researched the truth for many years. Upon investigating his case, I was puzzled as to why he became disillusioned, and why if he was in such a state, did he promote friendships with the high authorities of the Church, and forge documents to help prove the history of the Church to be true? Furthermore, I was far greater confused as to why these church leaders wanted to buy his documents and put them in control of the Church. (How these professed *prophets, seers* and *revelators* were deceived was the real question in many people's minds.)

Hoffman's intentions were easy to understand: Money. However, the Church's role in the scam was not so easy to distinguish-until I worked in Church Security. It was during my own investigation that the truth finally unfolded.

The truth is, many church officials, yet there are fewer than most might think, know the truth regarding the coming forth of the LDS canon of scriptures. They know that Joseph Smith was fed up with the hypocrisy and fallacy of the religions in his day. They knew that Joseph was a very bright and intelligent man who was "inspired" to make great religious reforms. He made his case and presented it to the world by writing *The Book of Mormon*. Many Mormons base their testimonies of this book on what have been called, "*the signed testimonies of the witnesses to The Book of Mormon*". Ironically, these same Mormons forget that every single one of these "*witnesses*" left the Church and many openly admitted that J. Smith perpetuated fraud. These devastating testimonies have been conveniently suppressed or categorically denied by the LDS Church.

