

BOOK OF MORMON LACKS CREDIBILITY

The Mormon Church, and its offshoots, claim that their scripture The Book of Mormon is a record of ancient America. This book appeared in 1830 as the result of an alleged miracle from God. There should be archaeological evidence. There is none. But Mormons choose to disagree with all the experts. Some Mormons say that since the book records great cataclysms at the time of the death of Jesus and after that there should be no evidence left. Without the evidence, there is nothing to convince that the book simply is nothing more than a nineteenth century hoax.

There are many religions and cults in the world that vie for your allegiance. In the end the choice of which one you will join has to be decided on the basis of reason and the best evidence alone. It will be the most believable creed that has no philosophical absurdities in it. A teaching is either reasonable or it is not. The Book of Mormon has to be discarded if it makes errors in reasoning.

The Book of Mormon states that when God does not do miracles such as apparitions of angels it is because there is no faith and miracles are worked by the power of faith (Moroni 7). Joseph did not do any miracles after the Book of Mormon was written. The Book is saying that he lost his faith. It is more likely that he never believed in the first place for he never did any convincing miracles or experienced any. So the Book of Mormon must be false when Smith did not have the faith that was needed before God could produce it through him. The Book of Mormon like Roman Catholicism sees faith as more than belief but as submission to the will of God in the mind and in the heart so it means believing and living out what you believe. Smith gave Harris, Whitmer and Cowdery a revelation that if they had a full faith they would see the gold plates. So that means they had to be exceptionally holy and good and honest men. But even the Mormon scriptures admit that they were not and they were all thrown out of the Church and Smith condemned them as evil. That is why their fall into fraud and counterfeiting and Harris' credulity mean that they could not have seen the Book of Mormon plates. The Book of Mormon then denies that they saw the plates. A God who only does miracles if you already believe is a strange God. He is supernaturally intervening for nothing except grandiose shows of power.

2 Nephi 2:13 argues that if there is no law there is no sin and if there is no sin there is no righteousness and if there is no righteousness there is no happiness and if there is no happiness there is no unhappiness and if there is no happiness or righteousness there is no punishment or sadness and if they do not exist there is no God and if there is no God there is no earth or creation.

These arguments are outrageously silly. Happiness can exist without us freely doing what is right. Rewards and punishment do not infer that God exists. And the teaching that heaven and earth must have been made by God is childish for who made God? If they had to have been made then what about God? The Mormon God is a material being and is not a being that has a chance of having to exist like $2+2=4$ like the Christian one. Heaven and earth could have been made by an impersonal spiritual intelligence that is not a person and is not entitled to be believed to be God or worshipped.

The Mormon Church cannot say that these arguments are just part of what the speaker in the Book was saying and not necessarily endorsed by God or the inspired author of the Book. The Book of Mormon makes it clear that it is an abridgment of the Nephite scriptures meaning that Mormon the abridger was going to use only material that was doctrinally correct for it would be madness to put stuff like that in when the space could be used for divinely approved teaching. Moreover, once you start using that excuse that the text might be inspired but what it says might not be endorsed by God, you could come to the epistles of Paul in the New Testament with the same approach. Scripture is no good to you if you accept the excuse. You could say that God inspired the four gospels and that he does not approve of everything in them. So unless a teaching in a scripture is specifically stated to be just the opinion of the speaker it has to be taken to be the word of God and the teaching of God. You could say that when the Old Testament reports God as having commanded something that you don't like you could say the author was only on about what he thought God was saying and was not claiming to be always right.

In 2 Nephi 11:7 we read that if there is no Christ there is no God. This seems to mean that if there is no Christ to die to satisfy the justice of God and atone for sins there can be no God for God does not care about us to save us (see 2 Nephi 9:26). But one person cannot atone for another. Our good works should be infinitely pleasing to God for God likes them infinitely and should be able to atone. Jesus could not atone if we are already atoned. The Christian gospel says that we do not deserve to be saved so God would be perfect right and just not to bother saving anybody if he didn't want to.

The Book of Mormon says that Satan appears like a good angel (Mosiah 30:53) and miraculously appeared and spoke to Eve from a serpent (2 Nephi 2:17, 18) and supernaturally supervised the people who set up the abominable Church (1 Nephi 13). When Satan has such powers that millions think are good miracles from God and which are clever deceptions in

ways we cannot see it follows that the only thing that gives us the right to believe that the Book of Mormon is the word of God is its ability to foretell the future. But there is no evidence for that. Any prophecy that was fulfilled could have been written after the event or was going to happen anyway by human deliberation. Though the Devil can make a prophecy and then force secretly possessed people to fulfil the prophecy meaning that even fulfilled prophecy does not prove that anybody or God can see the future we know that no believer can accept this and will have to put down prophecy as evidence. Anybody can write a pack of religious lies and say it is the word of God so God has to put some mark of authenticity on his real book. Had the Book of Mormon not attributed supernatural powers to Satan there might have been some hope for it. Smith then made the mistake of thinking that visions of angels and golden plates and feeling that the Book of Mormon was true would be enough which contradicts his book and makes it contradict itself for it promises these things.

Moroni 10:3-5 promises that those who sincerely pray about whether or not the Book of Mormon is true will find that it is true. Mormons interpret that to say that they will get a burning feeling that it is true from God which tells them that it is true. It mentions knowing and not feelings and the Book says that feelings can mislead so it means that the Book will be credible which is completely untrue. It is saying that there will be plenty of archaeological evidence for its claims. This is untrue.

The real test of a true prophet according to Deuteronomy 18 is that the prophet must not be sinless but that he must be extremely honest and truthful for God wouldn't speak through anybody that would tell or tells something even only the once that is supposed to be from God and which is not from God at all. This implies that we will be able to know if the prophet was this kind of man. But we do not know this of Moses or Joseph Smith or even Jesus for we are missing the favourable first-hand witness of those who knew them best and intimately and the testimony from Smith's neighbours and friends was that Smith was born liar. Deuteronomy 18 also implies that a false prophet can make loads of predictions that come true but error shows that he is not speaking for God at all so miracles prove nothing according to this chapter. But at the same time, it is better to do miracles for it shows you should get attention but not necessarily faith. A real prophet will always do miracles. Smith did none. He made no predictions of the future that are convincing evidence that he was able to see the future by the power of God. When a prophet has to be accurate in everything he says that is supposed to be inspired by God it follows that it is only right that the prophet make predictions and not be accepted until the prophecies have all come true (this automatically excludes Isaiah and Ezekiel who made prophecies that have not been all fulfilled yet from the Bible canon). For if a man making one false prophecy in the name of God is enough to take away any right to authority from him then a man who makes none and claims to be God's mouthpiece is worse. The Jews and Christians did not insert Deuteronomy 18 for it makes good sense and would only have made it harder for their false prophets who allegedly rewrote the Bible to succeed.

Alma said to Korihor, "Will ye say, Show unto me a sign, when ye have the testimony of all these thy brethren, and also all the holy prophets? The scriptures are laid before thee, yea, and all things denote there is a God; yea, even the earth, and all things that are upon the face of it, yea, and its motion, yea, and also all the planets which move in their regular form do witness that there is a Supreme Creator" (Alma 30:44). This appeals to the argument from design. The error in this is assuming that this indicates that there is one supreme creator. There could be several equal designers with none being supreme who planned what they were going to do. Moses 6:63 also testifies that Alma's argument is correct. When Alma says the design points to one God he clearly proves that the Mormon doctrine that many gods made all things was an afterthought and a heresy.

The Book of Mormon claims that there can be no law where there is no punishment for breaking the law (Alma 42:19) and uses this as the rationale behind the doctrine that Jesus died to pay for sins other people committed so that God would forgive. That is not true. Punishment is based on the idea of free will and merit – you deserve suffering for inflicting suffering in so far as you did it of your own free will. But many Atheists believe that the law can be safeguarded without belief in free will. Undoubtedly it can.

Smith contradicted the Book of Mormon in later revelations. He did not really believe in it himself. Jacob 2:24 reads, "Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord." Doctrine & Covenants 132:38-39 reads, "David also received many wives and concubines, and also Solomon ... and in nothing did they sin save in those things which they received not of me. David's wives and concubines were given unto him of me." Mormons say that God forbids unauthorised plural marriage in Jacob. But if its unauthorised then why is it called an abomination? That is like saying that eating cake is okay with permission but an abomination if it is eaten without it. It would be too severe. And Jacob mentions nothing about authorised or unauthorised.

The Book of Mormon says that three witnesses are needed before any charge against an elder can be listened to (Moroni 6:7). Ether 5:3,4 requires three witnesses to see the Golden Plates. But we have only Mormon and Moroni's word for the Book of Mormon if we assume that Smith was telling the truth (which really just leaves one witness, Smith). Mormon died in battle and who knows what Moroni was doing after that? So we really have one witness, Moroni! Perhaps they made the whole thing up or Moroni alone did it? Worse, perhaps Joseph Smith did get gold plates and the commission to translate

them but he decided not to bother and faked the translation. Mormon scriptures admit that Smith disobeyed God and was chastised by him after he received the plates. The point is, we have only Smith's word for it that the Book of Mormon is what is on the plates. Mormons answer that God told the three witnesses that the translation was true but we are not given God's exact words. Maybe he only said, "These are the plates of Mormon and my translation of them is to be believed", meaning he wanted them to believe his translation which may or may not have been effected properly by Smith. Even Mormons now say that prophets can get things wrong because they misinterpret things. How do they know then that the apostles misunderstood the resurrection of Jesus and that what they saw was not Jesus at all?