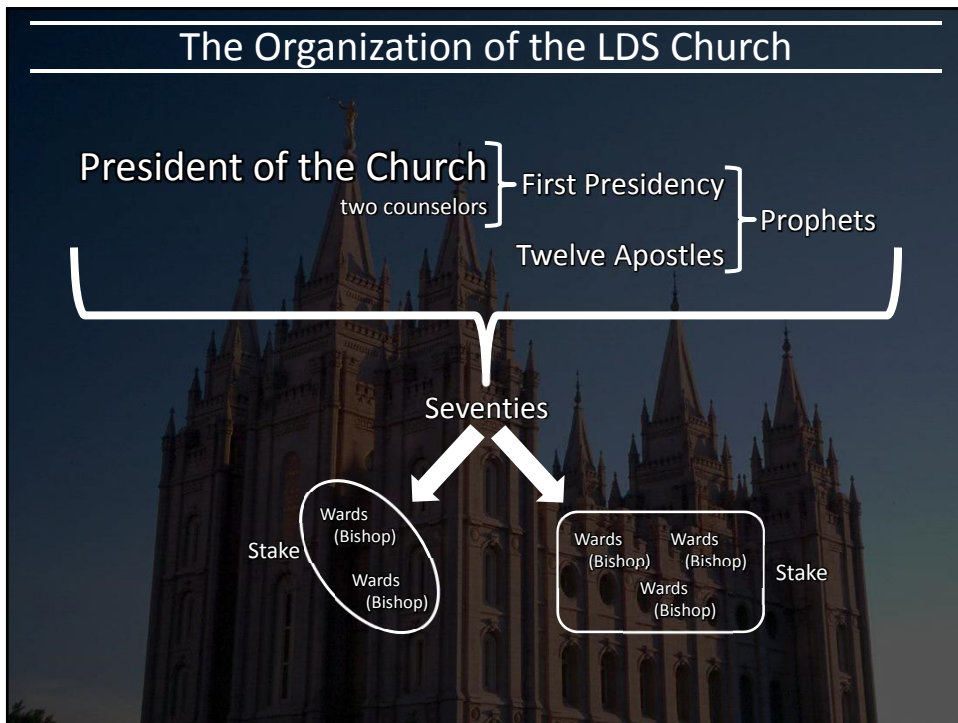
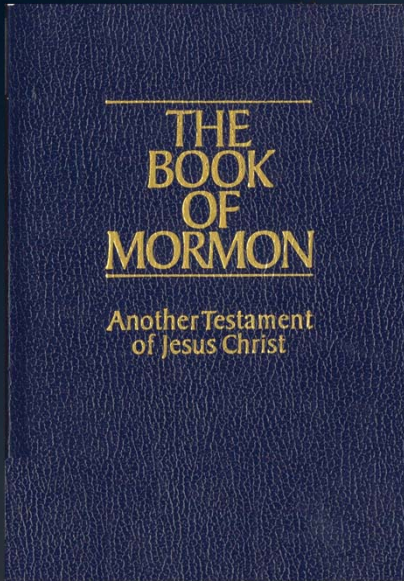


Organization and Origin of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints a.k.a. LDS or the “Mormons”

Dr. Richard G. Howe



The Origin of the LDS Church



The Book of Mormon:
2,000 BC - AD 421

Subject Matter

- purports to be an account of the history of three groups of peoples that migrated from the ancient world and settled on the Americas.

[LDS, *What Is the Book of Mormon?* (Salt Lake City: LDS, 1982): 1]

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The earliest civilization was the Jaredite civilization that left from the land of the tower of Babel shortly after the tower was destroyed approximately 4,000 years ago. The account of the Jaredites is in the book of Ether in the *Book of Mormon*.

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The Jaredites established a civilization in the Americas that flourished for almost 2,000 years.

The Jaredite civilization finally disintegrated by internal conflicts and a final total war.

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The second migration was the Nephite civilization that took place around 600 BC.

The Prophet Lehi and his friend Ishmael took their families into the wilderness.

Eventually they crossed the ocean to the Americas and established a great civilization.

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The rebellious group called themselves Lamanites, after Laman, the most powerful and forceful member.

The Lord later placed the curse of dark skin on the Lamanites.

When later certain Lamanites became believers, they became “white and delightsome” and were called Nephites.

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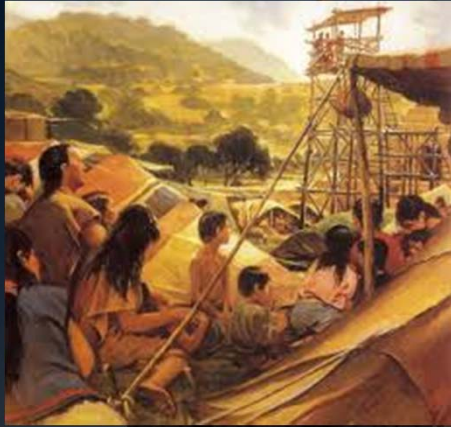


Throughout their history, there were times when the Lamanites were more faithful than the Nephites.

As a result of their corruption, the Nephites were eventually destroyed by war.

Some Nephites survived and mixed with the Lamanites (and later the Mulekites) and the remnant has become what we now know as the American Indians.

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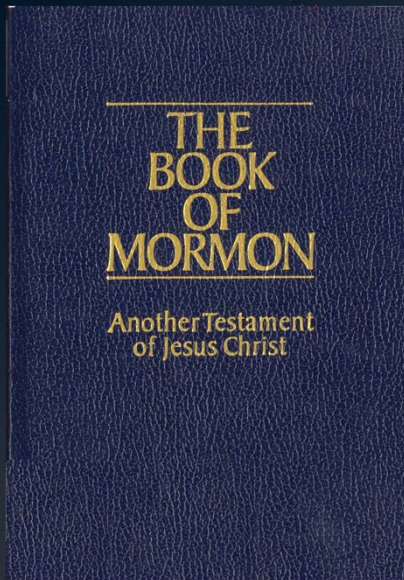


The third migration, about 11 years after Lehi left Jerusalem, was the Mulekite, although that name does not occur in the *Book of Mormon*.

Mulek, the son of Zedekiah, and his followers crossed the ocean and settled in the Americas.

The people of Mulek eventually merged with the Nephites / Lamanite and are what we now know as the American Indians.

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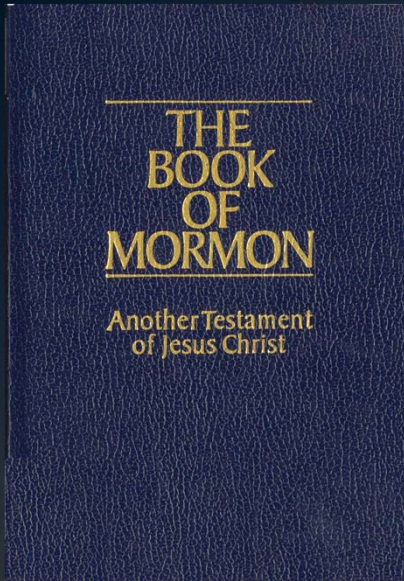
The Book of Mormon: 2,000 BC - AD 421

Subject Matter

While Mormons claim that the *Book of Mormon* contains the fullness of the everlasting gospel, virtually none of the distinctive doctrines of Mormonism (i.e., doctrines that distinguish Mormonism from Christianity) are found in the book.

Most of the distinctive doctrines of Mormonism come from Joseph Smith's other writings—the *Doctrine and Covenants* and the *Pearl of Great Price*.

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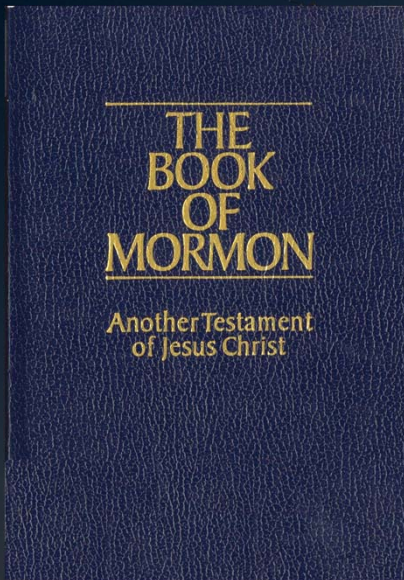
The Book of Mormon:
2,000 BC - AD 421

How the Book of Mormon
got to us today

The history of the events of the
Book of Mormon was written by
many ancient prophets.

They kept their records on metal
plates and handed them down from
one generation to the next.

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The Book of Mormon:
2,000 BC - AD 421

How the Book of Mormon
got to us today

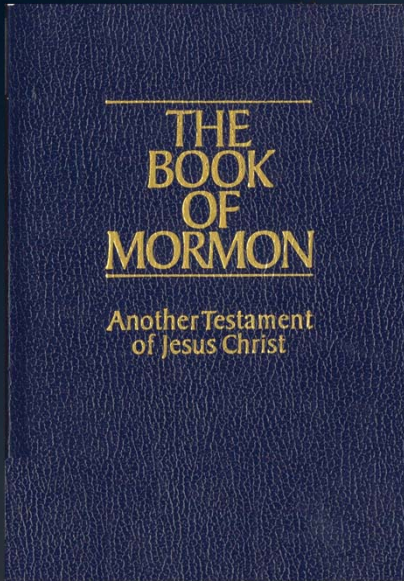
One of the prophets, named Mormon,
abridged the major portion of the plates
into the record we have today.

Mormon was one of the last prophets to
write on the Book of Mormon plates.

He lived from about AD 310 to AD 385.

The Book of Mormon was named for him
because of the major roles he played as
writer and as abridger of the plates.

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The Book of Mormon:
2,000 BC - AD 421

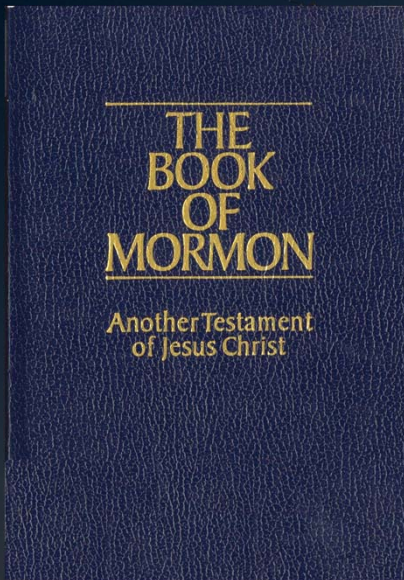
How the Book of Mormon
got to us today

His successor was his son, Moroni.

Moroni buried the plates in the hill
Cumorah in what is now up state New
York.

Moroni dies around AD 421.

The Origin of the LDS Church



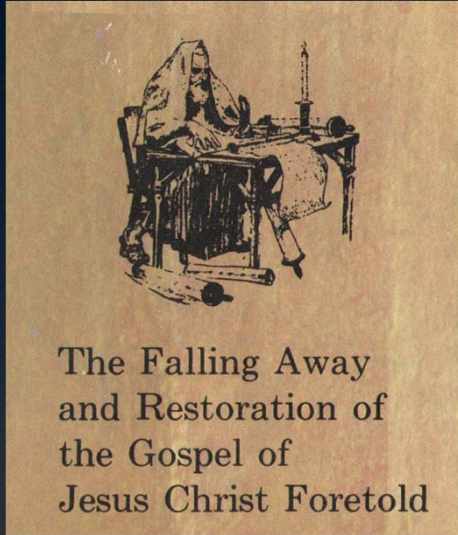
The Book of Mormon:
2,000 BC - AD 421

How the Book of Mormon
got to us today

In 1827, Moroni, as a resurrected being,
he appeared to Joseph Smith, Jr. and
eventually lead Smith to where the plates
were buried.

Joseph Smith Jr. translated the plates,
which were written in "reformed
Egyptian."

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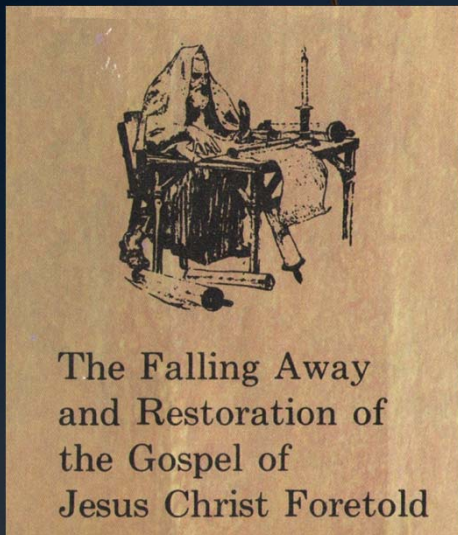


The Apostasy

Mormons believe that the Bible predicted a great apostasy (falling away) and that the truths of the gospel were lost.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first ...

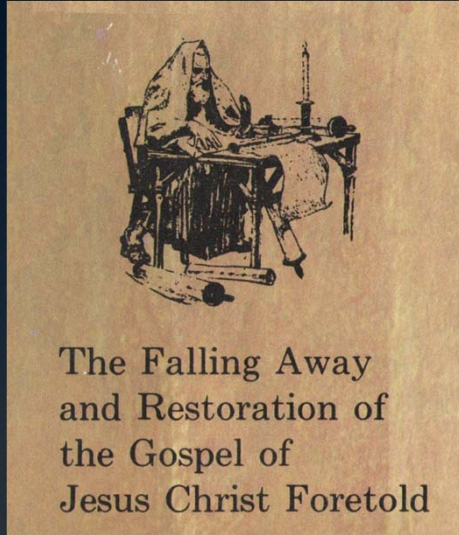
The Origin of the LDS Church



The Apostasy

When mankind rejected God's apostles, God removed the priesthood authority from the Church and from the earth.

The Origin of the LDS Church



The Apostasy

When the people rejected the truth and killed the apostles, God took the priesthood authority and the Church from the earth. The loss of revelation through the Church led to great confusion, contention, and incorrect teachings. This falling away from the truth is called the Apostasy.

[Corporation of the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *The Restoration: Study Guide 3* (Salt Lake City: Corporation of the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1986): 1.]

The Origin of the LDS Church



The Priesthood

The priesthood is the authority to act in the name of God for the salvation of men.

It is the power by which the gospel is preached; by which the ordinances of salvation are performed so that they will be binding on earth and in heaven: by which men are sealed up unto eternal life, being assured of the fullness of the Father's kingdom hereafter and by which in due course the Lord will govern the nations of the earth and all that pertains to them. [Bruce McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, q.v. "Priesthood" p. 594]

The Origin of the LDS Church



The Priesthood

There are two priesthoods (though thought of as one): Aaronic and Melchizedek

Offices of the Aaronic Priesthood: deacon, teacher, priest, and bishop

Office of the Melchizedek Priesthood: elder, seventy, high priest, patriarch or evangelist, and apostle

The Origin of the LDS Church



The Priesthood

Thus, because of the Apostasy, the authority to act in the name of God was removed from the earth. No church since that time has had the authority to act in God's name.

It was necessary, therefore, for God to restore the gospel truths and the priesthood authority.

The Origin of the LDS Church



Joseph Smith, Jr.
1805-1844

First Vision (spring of 1820)

- 14 years old
- many revivals going on, Smith was confused about the different denominations

The Origin of the LDS Church



Joseph Smith, Jr.
1805-1844

First Vision (spring of 1820)

- In accordance (supposedly) w/ James 1:5 Smith prayed about which church to join
- Smith had a vision of two personages; the Father & Son; one said: "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him."

The Origin of the LDS Church



Joseph Smith, Jr.
1805-1844

First Vision (spring of 1820)

- Smith inquired as to which religion he should join. The personage said: "Don't join any of these religions They are all wrong and corrupt."
- Smith refrained from joining any of them and continued until further directed.

The Origin of the LDS Church



Joseph Smith, Jr.
1805-1844

Second Vision (September 21, 1823)

2nd vision Moroni (the last prophet of the Book of Mormon) appeared from the dead and told of a book written upon golden plates
Smith received the plates in 1827 which were buried in a hill called Cumorah

The Origin of the LDS Church



Joseph Smith, Jr.
1805-1844

Second Vision
(September 21, 1823)

The plates were translated by
1829.

LDS (The Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-Day Saints) church
started 1830.

told of ancient civilization of
Nephites who were descendants of
the Jews.