

# Mormonism

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# Introduction

- Officially known as the ‘The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’, it was founded by Joseph Smith Jr. in the late 1820s
  - Joseph Smith, Jr. was born on December 23, 1805 in Sharon, Vermont and was killed at the age of 38 on June 27, 1844 at Carthage, Illinois
  - He claimed to have received golden plates from the angel *Moroni*, that contained The Book of Mormon (a collection of Israelite prophets who had appeared in North America).
  - He apparently translated these golden tablets with the power of God; and then published it in book form.

# A close study of Mormon Teachings

- The test of time is a way to gauge whether the teachings are truly Divine or whether they have required constant human intervention to update it.
- Divine teachings are void of contradictions
- The mission of the Holy Prophet (sa) was foretold in the Bible by Moses and Jesus in Duet 18:28 and John 16:12-13
- The Promised Messiah (as) himself foretold the victories that were destined for him and his movement.

The teachings and claims of Mormons must be evaluated based on the above points

# The Claim of Joseph Smith

- He claimed to be a prophet, like the Biblical Israelite prophets but with a close study the following points come to light
- The Prophecy in Duet 18:18-20 and John 16:12-13 speaks of a Prophet who would
  1. Speak directly the word of God, in the name of God, and speak of future events
  2. Present a book that completes the guidance from God
  3. That Prophet will die only after he has completed his mission
- While the following are the claims by Joseph Smith
  1. He received golden plates which he translated, he did not receive direct revelation.
  2. He was not able to complete the guidance from God which is why two other books follow, "Doctrine and Covenants and Pearl of Great Price"
  3. He died before fulfilling his mission, it was then continued by his disciples

# The Concept of God in Mormonism

- Does God Have a Physical or Spiritual Body? There is an obvious Contradiction about the reality of God from the Book of Mormon
- The Mormons believe that God is the Heavenly Father of all mankind, literally
  - They believe that *man is what God once was* – in other words, He developed from a human state, into an ‘exalted’ and ‘glorified’ body; therefore, **He has a physical body**
- This concept of a ‘physical’ God is derived from the following quote:
  - “The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.” (*The Doctrine and Covenants, 130:22*)
- However, we can *refute their concept* of a physical God through their own scriptures:
  - “Holy, holy God; we believe that thou art God, and we believe that thou art holy, and that thou wast a spirit, and that thou art a spirit, and that thou wilt be a spirit forever.” (*Alma 31:15*)

# The Mormon Concept of Trinity

- Another obvious contradiction lies in their claim of trinity
- The Mormon concept of Trinity is different than the mainstream Christian view – they believe that the Father and the Son both have physical entities while the Holy Ghost is in spirit form
  - “The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.” (*The Doctrine and Covenants, 130:22*)
- However, although they think that all three are separate entities, they still insist that all of them together make up one God
  - “And after this manner shall ye baptize in my name; for behold, verily I say unto you, that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one; and I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and the Father and I are one.” (*Nephi 11:27*)
  - “Which Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God, infinite and eternal, without end. Amen.” (*The Doctrine and Covenants, 20:28*)

# Baptism for the Dead

- Another unique teaching that exists for Mormons is the concept of baptising the dead, this was sought to solve the problem of all those who have died and would therefore not be raised in the kingdom of God, this way they would.
- Jesus Christ taught that baptism is essential to the salvation of all who have lived on earth
  - “Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”. (John, 3:5)
- **Baptism for the dead** or **proxy baptism** today commonly refers to the religious practice of baptizing a person on behalf of one who is dead - a living person receiving the rite on behalf of a deceased person.
  - It has been practiced since 1840
  - Believe that baptism is required for entry into the Kingdom of God
  - This sacred ordinance includes full immersion in water, just as a baptism is performed for a living person

# Black people of Mormonism

- Another example of how their teachings have required updating is with regards to their initial treatment of Black people (of African Decent).
- Over the past two centuries, the relationship between **black people and Mormonism** has been riotous.
- Mormon Church had a policy which prevented most men of black African descent from being ordained to the church's lay priesthood. Being ordained means to be entitled as a Religious Minister/Pastor.
- In 1978, the First Presidency and the Twelve, led by church president Spencer Kimball, declared they had received a revelation that the time to end these restrictions had finally come. After this revelation, people of all races could hold priesthood offices and receive temple ordinances.



# Things to Ponder

- Ahmadiyya Community and Mormons both have been facing persecution and still both have been succeeding.
- What is the difference?
  - There are two points:
    - 1) Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> - There were many prophecies and revelations predicting his success.
    - 2) The teaching of Ahmadiyyat have passed the test of time and remained intact and Khilafat has continued the core message of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> compared to the system of Mormons where every succeeding “Prophet” can void any and all previous orders.
  - Lastly, success isn’t a parameter to evaluate the truthfulness of a religious community, even businesses and corporations that struggle and work hard can achieve success. The main point is the obstacles and prophesies connected that have spoken about the success, which is very apparent throughout the discourses and writings of the Promised Messiah (as).