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Salvation: A Second Dialogue between Elder Brownson and Mr. Whitby

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Abstract: This two-part series gives an imaginary dialogue between two individuals. Jaques tells the story of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, gives a brief description of the book's contents, and names the languages into which the book has been translated. The second part concludes the series.

The Latter-day Saints

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SALVATION.

A SECOND DIALOGUE BETWEEN ELDER BROWNSON AND MR. WHITEY.

(Concluded from page 653.)

Elder B. I will now resume my narrative. On the 15th of May, 1829, the young man and a friend—Oliver Cowdery, being convinced of the necessity and the proper mode of baptism, went into the woods to pray on the subject. While praying, a heavenly messenger—John the Baptist, descended in a cloud of light, laid his hands upon their heads, and ordained them, saying—"Upon you, my fellow-servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the Gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness." The messenger said that the Aaronic Priesthood had not power to lay on hands for the Gift of the Holy Ghost, but that that power should afterwards be given, and he commanded these two persons to baptize each other, and then re-ordain each other, which they straightway did, and the Spirit of God came upon them, and they prophesied. They afterwards received the Melchisedec Priesthood, which has power to lay on hands for the Gift of the Holy Ghost, and to administer in spiritual blessings.

Mr. W. Why did they re-ordain each other? Was not the ordination of the angel sufficient?

Elder B. There was no one on earth

who had authority to baptize these two persons, therefore the angel conferred it upon them, that they might be qualified to baptize each other. They were required to re-ordain each other after baptism, doubtless for the same reason that Jesus was baptized—that they might fulfil the law of God in its proper order, as far as possible, and thus become patterns for those who might believe on their words.

Mr. W. Very likely.

Elder B. When the Book of Mormon was published, some who read it became convinced of its truth, and were baptized. On the 6th of April, 1830, a Church, consisting of six members, was organized at Fayette, Seneca county, New York. That Church was the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The youth who was the instrument in bringing forth the book, and in organizing the Church, was Joseph Smith. The Church increased rapidly in numbers, and in the gifts of the Spirit. In the fall of the year, several Elders went to the state of Ohio, preaching, and baptized hundreds, and also introduced the Gospel into all the states west of New York. In 1831, a settlement was formed in Lake county, Ohio, and another in Jackson county, Missouri. The Saints in Ohio built a Temple to the Lord, at Kirtland, at the completion of which, in 1836, the power and glory of God were manifested in a remarkable degree. In consequence of continued per-

secution the Ohio settlement was abandoned in the year 1838. The Saints in Missouri laid the foundation stone for a Temple, at Independence, Jackson county, on the 3rd of August, 1831. This Temple is not yet built. The Saints were driven by mob violence from Jackson county to Clay county, in 1833. Soon after, they were driven from Clay county to Caldwell and other counties. In the winter of 1838-9, the Saints were expelled, at the bayonet's point, from the state of Missouri. In these awful persecutions and drivings, neither age, sex, nor condition was spared from the most revolting brutality, such was the relentless cruelty of the enemies of the Saints. In 1839, they began to gather on the east bank of the Mississippi, in the state of Illinois, and commenced to build up the city of Nauvoo, and soon afterwards a noble Temple. The Temple was finished and dedicated in 1846. In 1837, Elders were sent on a mission to Britain, where they succeeded in baptizing multitudes. In 1843, Elders were sent to the Society Isles, where numerous converts were made. On the 27th of June, the same year, the Prophet Joseph Smith, and his brother Hyrum, the Patriarch, were cruelly murdered by a mob, armed and disguised, in Carthage jail, twelve miles from Nauvoo, where these two men of God were thrown, for pretended crimes, and held for trial under the government pledge of personal safety. During his lifetime, Joseph Smith was embroiled in nearly fifty law-suits, yet was never legally convicted of any offence to the law of the land. In 1846, the Saints, again assailed by persecution, were compelled to quit Nauvoo. Fifteen thousand to twenty thousand people were obliged to vacate their dearly bought homes, travel across the vast prairies, and seek a home among the wild fastnesses of the Rocky Mountains. While in this condition, the government of the United States required the Saints to furnish a battalion of able-bodied men to aid in the Mexican war. This unjust requisition was complied with, and five hundred men were immediately enrolled, and sent to California, leaving their wives and families destitute in an Indian country. In July, 1847, a pioneer company of the Saints entered the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. Setting aside the incidental privations of a new settlement, especially under these circumstances, that and the

surrounding vallies have ever since been the peaceable and prosperous home of the Saints. They are now organized as a territory of the United States. Cities have been built, lands improved, and a Temple two hundred feet long is in progress. During the last four years, flourishing missions have been established in France, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Italy, Switzerland, Malta, Gibraltar, Hindostan, Australia, and the Sandwich Isles; and Elders have recently been sent to Siam, Ceylon, China, the West Indies, British Guiana, and Chili. The Latter-day Saints in Britain now number about thirty thousand. About twenty thousand have left these shores to go to the head quarters of the Church. Between two thousand and three thousand leave Britain annually, for the same destination. The Book of Mormon is published in English, Welsh, French, German, Italian, Danish, and Polynesian. The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church is published in English, Welsh, and Danish. The following papers and periodicals are now in circulation—The "Deseret News," published semi-monthly, at Great Salt Lake City; the "Seer," monthly, at Washington, United States; the "Millennial Star," weekly, at Liverpool; the "Udgorn Seion," in Welsh, weekly, at Merthyr Tydfil; the "Skandinaviens Stjerne," in Danish, semi-monthly, at Copenhagen; and "Le Réflecteur," in French, monthly, at Lausanne.

Mr. W. The Latter-day Saints have certainly made a most extraordinary and rapid progress, notwithstanding their persecutions. How many kinds of ministers are there in your Church?

Elder B. In the Church of Christ there are two Priesthoods—the Melchisedec, and the Levitical or Aaronic. The Melchisedec Priesthood is the higher Priesthood, and, as I said before, holds the power to administer in spiritual things. Apostles, Patriarchs or Evangelists, Seventies, High Priests, and Elders are of this Priesthood. The Levitical Priesthood is the lesser Priesthood, and holds authority to administer in temporal things and outward ordinances. Bishops, Priests, Teachers, and Deacons are of this Priesthood. The Apostleship is the highest office in the Church, and can officiate in all ordinances and blessings, spiritual or temporal, and build up the Kingdom of God. One of the Apostles is chosen to

be Prophet, Seer, and Revelator to the Church, and he has authority to give revelations from God for the guidance of the whole Church. Since the organization of the Church, in 1830, this Prophet, Seer, and Revelator has been also the President of the Church in all the world. The President is assisted by two Counsellors holding the Apostleship. These three constitute what is termed the First Presidency of the Church. The duty of a Patriarch is to bless the Saints with Patriarchal blessings. Twelve of the Apostles are organized as a Quorum, whose duty it is to travel in all the world, and introduce the Gospel, and regulate the affairs of the Church in their travels. These Twelve are of course subject to the First Presidency. One of the Twelve is President of the Quorum. There are about thirty-three Quorums of Seventies, seventy in each Quorum, as the name implies. Each Quorum of the Seventies has seven Presidents. One of these seven presides over his associates. The seven Presidents of the first Quorum preside over all the Quorums of Seventies. The duty of the Seventies is to travel in all the world, and introduce the Gospel, under the direction of the Quorum of the Twelve. The High Priests constitute a Quorum, which has a President with two Counsellors. The duty of the High Priests is more particularly to preside. Twelve High Priests are chosen as the High Council of the Church. The duty of the High Council is to try the most serious offences against the laws of the Church. The Elders constitute a Quorum, which has a President with two Counsellors. An Elder has authority to preach the Gospel, baptize, lay on hands for the Gift of the Holy Ghost, and to administer in spiritual blessings. All the officers above an Elder are also called Elders. The duty of a Bishop is to administer in the temporal affairs of the Church, and to sit as a judge upon transgressors. The duty of a Priest is to preach the Gospel, and administer in outward ordinances—such as baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and to visit the members of the Church, and exhort them to faithfulness. The duty of a Teacher is to be as a father to the members, to watch over them continually, and see that there is no lying, backbiting, evil speaking, or iniquity of any kind, in the Church, and that all the members meet together often, do their duty, and

live in love and union. The duty of the Deacon is to attend to the temporal well-being and comfort of the Church, and to assist the Teacher in his duties when necessary. The Priests, the Teachers, and the Deacons, each constitute a distinct Quorum, having its respective President, with his two Counsellors. The lesser offices of the Priesthood are all embodied in the higher, consequently an officer can minister in the duties of any office beneath him. Thus an Apostle can administer in the duties of High Priest, Elder, or Deacon.

Mr. W. You have a most wonderful and elaborate organization.

Elder B. No other organization in the world is so complete, or so beautifully adapted "for the perfecting of the Saints, the work of the ministry, or the edifying of the body of Christ," which St. Paul declares to be the end of the Priesthood.

Mr. W. How was so minute a knowledge of the various offices and their duties obtained? It is not given in the Bible.

Elder B. Neither the Bible nor the Book of Mormon so particularly describe the offices of the Holy Priesthood, or so clearly define their duties. By revelation from God, and by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost was this glorious knowledge given in these last days.

Mr. W. It's passing strange! And yet I feel glad—I cannot but admire your system—But why do the Latter-day Saints leave their native land, and go to America? as I understand they do.

Elder B. In a few words I can show you the propriety of that principle. You know very well that righteousness has no fellowship with unrighteousness. The righteous and the wicked can never live in peace and harmony. The laws of God can never be fully obeyed while the people of God are scattered among the wicked. The separation of the people of God from the wicked has been a prominent feature in all dispensations. Salvation can never be realized without this separation. Abraham was commanded to go with his family to a land that he knew not. The children of Israel were commanded to gather out of the land of Egypt, to the land of Canaan, and be separate from their enemies. The Israelites ever considered their dispersion among the nations as a most signal sign of the displeasure of

the Lord. Jesus wept over Jerusalem, and said how often he would have gathered her children as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but the stubborn Jews would not listen to him, consequently they were scattered among all nations, the most fearful curse that ever befel that people. They still look forward, with the strongest confidence, to their gathering again to Jerusalem and to Palestine, and regard that gathering as ample recompence for the long, dreary night of scattering which they are now passing through. And the Lord has promised that the wonders of the last gathering of His people shall totally eclipse, and banish from their minds, the wonders of the gathering from Egypt.—Jer. xvi. xxxi. When the Latter-day judgments are being sent among the wicked, does not St. John say that a voice is to be heard from heaven—"Come out of her, [Babylon—the wicked nations] my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues?"—Rev. xviii. 4. And Joel says, "In Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, shall be deliverance," in the last days.—Joel ii. 32. We know where Jerusalem is, and God has revealed that the Mount Zion of the last days is in America, and has also commanded His people to gather there, and prepare themselves to dwell in peace when Jesus Christ shall come. The Jews will return to Jerusalem by and bye. At your leisure, read Isaiah ii. v. xi. xliii. xlix. Zech. x. Ezek. xi. xx. xxxiii. Zeph. iii. Jer. xxxii. Many other passages might be named, but these prove that a mighty gathering of the people of God was to occur in the last days. It is now being fulfilled.

Mr. W. I will read the passages. But I have one thing more to name. I am told that the Latter-day Saints believe in a man's having more wives than one. This, if true, is opposed to my feelings, and to my ideas of propriety and morality. Is this doctrine believed in and practised by your people? If so, how can you reconcile it with Scripture and morality?

Elder B. This doctrine is believed in by the Latter-day Saints. It is practised by them in the Territory of Utah. There is no law there to forbid polygamy. But they do not practise it in England, or in any country where the law of the land forbids the practice. Your feelings, and your ideas of propriety and morality, are induced by your education. In this country, men and

women are educated to believe that polygamy is flagrantly immoral, and nothing more or less than licentiousness. This is a most erroneous idea. There is an immense difference between a man's holding illegal and promiscuous intercourse with the other sex, for the pleasure of the moment only, regardless of consequences, and his legally marrying several wives, and honourably supporting them and their children. In the first case, there is a grave abuse of the sexual powers, and a grievous violation of the highest and holiest principles. In the second case, there is nothing of this kind, but merely an extensive development of those powers and principles. There is far less licentiousness in the East, where polygamy prevails, than in the West, where it is illegal. As regards Scripture, there is not a word in the Bible condemning polygamy, not a word. On the contrary, the most righteous men known in sacred history, advocated and practised this principle. Did God favour them the less on that account? Not a jot. He was the author of the principle. In certain instances, an Israelite could not obey the law of God, without taking more wives than one. For example—a childless widow had legal claim on her deceased husband's brother, or nearest male relative, for the fulfilment of marital duties. If the brother or relative refused to fulfil these duties, he was publicly disgraced by the woman. Deut. xxv.

Mr. W. I acknowledge that there is an essential difference between the two cases you mention. But as respects the law in Israel, I thought that Jesus Christ did away with that.

Elder B. There is no record of his doing away with it. He said—"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the Prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Matt. v. 17.

Mr. W. But would not polygamy make the women jealous of each other?

Elder B. There is no cause for it. We are all redeemed by one Lord—should that make us jealous of each other? We are all the children of one heavenly Father—should that make us jealous? You have several children—should that make your first-born jealous of the others? Just as little cause exists for the association of jealousy with polygamy. Indeed it is calculated to dispel jealousy. For instance—In this country, three young women all

love the same young man. Being rivals, it is quite natural to suppose that the young women, through their jealousy, hate each other in exact proportion as they love the young man, because they know that the law will not allow him to be married to them all, and consequently when one has obtained him, the others have irrecoverably lost him. If polygamy were allowed, this jealousy would not exist, because a woman would know she could be married to any man she loved, if she could win his affection, which part of the business might be safely entrusted to her.

Mr. W. But what advantages would accrue through a man's having more wives than one?

Elder B. I have just told you one very great advantage—a woman could, without fear of rivalry, become the wife of the man on whom she had set the purest and warmest affections of her soul. She would not be compelled, as many are now, to throw herself away on some brute in human form, who would scarcely pass the honeymoon before he treated her worse than his cattle. Such wretches do not deserve a wife at all. But what are women to do? You can't unsex them. Women are women, after all, and they know they have a right to husbands and protectors. If they cannot get as good as they wish, they will get as good as they can. Therefore leave their choice free as to whom they shall have. A woman gives herself wholly and entirely, body and affections, to a man. She ought surely to be allowed to bestow such a gift on whom she pleases. She ought certainly to choose whatever man she pleases to hold unlimited and sole control over her person

and property. If this were more extensively the case, we should hear less of wife beating and wife murdering, accounts of which figure so conspicuously in our newspapers. Now polygamy would grant the advantage named, whereas monogamy is one of the greatest bars to the happiness of the female sex.

Mr. W. But would you have all men marry several wives each?

Elder B. That would not necessarily follow. It would be more likely that good men would each have several wives, and that bad men would find it difficult to get any wife to ill-use and beat. This would bring to men a reward and a punishment, in which the women would be proud to administer, and which would do more for their protection than all the legislative enactments in the world.

Mr. W. Well, I must think upon this subject. I certainly do not feel to object so much to it as I did before I named it to you.

Mary. [*Mr. W.'s daughter.*] Dinner's ready, please, father.

Mr. W. Then I suppose we must retire. You shall stay and have dinner with me, and then you shall be at liberty to attend to your business, as I think I shall have detained you long enough today. By the bye, I have read the tract you lent me, I like it very well. I shall certainly go to your meetings, and hear a little more, and I will not promise you that I shall not be a Latter-day Saint yet, for I must say that your religion is more consistent with the Bible than any other which I have examined.

Elder B. You can't do better, sir, I assure you.

JOHN JAQUES.

HISTORY OF JOSEPH SMITH.

(Continued from page 648.)

Friday, March 4th. Attended school as usual. The sleighing is failing fast, the icy chains of winter seem to be giving way under the influence of the returning sun, and spring will soon open to us with all its charms.

Saturday, 5th. Attended school. In the afternoon the board kiln took fire, and the lumber was principally consumed. This is the fifth or sixth time it has burn-

ed this winter, to the best of my recollection.

Sunday, 6th. Spent the day at home in the enjoyment of the society of my family, around the social fireside.

Monday, 7th. Spent the day in attending to my studies.

At evening, met with my class at Professor Seixas' room, and translated the 17th chapter of Genesis.