



Type: Magazine Article

The Book of Mormon, and the End of the World

Author(s): L. F. Monch

Source: *The Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, Vol. 48, No. 15 (12 April 1886)

Published by: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Page(s): 235–240

Abstract: This is a six-part series discussing how Mormonism fulfills biblical prophecy concerning the last days: the coming of Elijah, restoration of the gospel, and correct ordinances such as baptism by immersion and the sacrament, Church organization, and continuing revelation. The third part begins a discussion of baptism.

foot of the mountains, where a small lake empties into the bay. Being a warm day we were very thirsty, and struck a herd boy's attitude upon the ground to quench our thirst. "Ah! it's salty, salty as brine," we exclaimed in the same breath. We had now to walk an hour before coming to drinking water. This salt lake probably has its source from a mineral spring near the base of the mountains. Fifteen minutes from this lake and we are at the mouth of the pass which leads over the mountains into the plains of Attica. We turned now and looked back upon the bay, where we saw in imagination the great battle of Salamis. It was here Themistocles gained a signal victory over the Persians. Now all was silent as the grave. The only indication of life was a big lazy Albanian stretched out upon the ground watching his flock of sheep. At nearly the highest point of the pass is located the Daphne, at present a cloister, but formerly a fortress, marking the boundary between the Athenians and the Eleusians. Not far from these old ruins the road enters the plains of Attica, and Athens is in sight. Where the pass emerges into the plains is a little house about 4x6 feet, and about 6 feet high. On the outside is a daub of a picture representing the Savior, on the outside is a miserable looking picture representing

the Virgin Mary. Before the window of this miniature structure the Greek Catholics on their journey may stop, kneel down upon the earth in the dust or mud, and offer up a prayer before these images. The road we have been traveling was in ancient times the *holy road* to Eleusis, over which many a grand procession has marched to take part in the religious festivals given in the Temple of Demeter and Core, in whose honor a beautiful work of the sculptor is still kept in the museum at Eleusis. Athens is a pretty little city and quite modern. The money here reminds one of the Spartan money introduced by Lycurgus. It is quite a task for us to carry our money about, not because we have so much, but because a shilling's worth is about all one man ought to carry. European civilization, however, is advancing towards the East. It has already pushed its way over the Mediterranean, and forced its commerce into most of its ports. The Greeks have become considerably mixed with other nations; still they are struggling for their former greatness and place in the world's history; a noble ambition, but out of proportion to their genius and resources.

Kind regards from Brother Lyman.
Your brother in the Gospel,
J. M. TANNER.

THE BOOK OF MORMON, AND THE END OF THE WORLD.

BY ELDER L. F. MONCH.

—O—

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 213].

"In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."—Matt. xviii, 16.

We proved in the last number that baptism is an ordinance absolutely necessary to secure salvation, and also that it was instituted by the highest authority in heaven or on earth: it will be our object to prove, in this number, that the correct form is also necessary, to receive the promised blessing, obtained through the observance of this holy ordinance. We are aware that many are of the opinion that it does not matter how the ceremony is performed nor who

performs it, so long as it is called by the name of baptism; and so long as water is used in some form it does not matter whether it is through the agency of sprinkling, pouring or immersion. Let us see if this is a correct conclusion.

In the first place we should know that our Father in heaven is very particular respecting the observance of His laws and the carrying out of His ordinances, a fact which can be demonstrated from a number of passages

and incidents in the Bible, a few of which we will introduce here.

After the Lord had given Moses a pattern of the tabernacle, He concluded with the following command: "See *that* thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." He was even commanded how he was to rear it when it was finished, which was also done by men selected by special revelation; we read: "And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was showed thee in the mount." Yea, so particular was He, that He even gave instruction how to fold it for the purpose of carrying, and who was to carry it, and no one else was permitted to officiate in this capacity. The same particular instruction was given to Aaron and his sons as to their dress when performing the duties of their offices. When a temple in place of a tabernacle was to be built, as before, a special pattern was given from heaven that it might be acceptable unto the Lord; we read: "Then David gave to Solomon, his son, the pattern of the porch..... and the pattern of all that he had by the spirit." When the law was revealed from the mount its faithful observance was demanded of the people in the following stringent language: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of the law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen."

Some people are of the opinion that in the days of the Savior, God ceased to be so particular with respect to the observance of revealed laws from heaven; but this would simply prove Him to be a changeable God, and contrary to His oft repeated assertion, "I am the same to-day and forever;" a truth which is fully sustained by the New Testament, for we find that the laws given by our Savior in the sermon on the mount, were made equally as obligatory; we read: "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Now, these were only simple commandments pertaining to general principles of doctrine.

Here, therefore, we have the testimony of the Father and the Son, that all things must be observed and performed according to the pattern revealed from heaven, and that judgments are pronounced upon those who break one of the least commandments and teach men so. And if it was necessary to have a correct pattern for the tabernacle, and all things were to be constructed precisely according to this pattern, how much more necessary must it be to have a correct pattern for such an important ordinance as that of baptism upon which our salvation hangs; and if a curse was pronounced upon every one that confirmed not every word of this law (law of Moses) to do them, and judgments upon those who broke one of the least commandments, and taught men so, what must be the penalty of him who changes or breaks the great law of baptism, one of the first steps to salvation, from which the Son of God was not even exempt. And again if there was a pattern given for the tabernacle and temple, surely our Father in heaven has not left us without a correct pattern for this all important principle. Let us see if we can find one; and as this is one of the foundation stones upon which the true Church of Christ rests, we trust our readers will pardon us if we are a little explicit and lengthy.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Now, if Jesus is "the way," the pattern set us by Him in the observance of this principle, is undoubtedly the correct one, and by adopting it without the least variation or change, according to the law of God, our heavenly Father will certainly acknowledge it, and we will reap the desired blessing. Let us see what it was.

In Matthew iii, 13-17, we read: Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it* to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway

out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon him: And lo, a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

There is much valuable information contained in this little episode if we examine it carefully. In the first place, our Savior was old enough to know for what purpose he went to the river Jordan; secondly, he went of his own free will and choice, there being no compulsion; thirdly, he asked John to perform the task for him; fourthly, this baptism was performed in a river where there was an abundance of water; fifthly, he went down into the water, for we read: "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water;" sixthly, we are informed by the words of the Savior Himself, that it was necessary, "*for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.*" The Savior was without sin, because He fulfilled or rather kept every law that was revealed from God; we have proven in a previous number that this law was revealed from God, had our Savior not observed it, He would have broken a law, and therefore could not have been our Redeemer, neither could He have gone into the kingdom of heaven according to His own words to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of the water and of the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." John iii, 5. When He was baptized in the Jordan He was born of the water, after that we are told that the spirit of God descended like a dove and lighted upon Him, hence He was born of the spirit, thus fulfilling the words to Nicodemus, and inasmuch as He kept all the other laws, He was entitled to go into the kingdom of heaven.

So far then we have here a perfect pattern except one point that may perhaps be regarded a little doubtful, by some, viz: was the act performed by sprinkling, pouring or immersion. If we can prove either of these forms, without a doubt the pattern will be complete, and we need no longer be deceived on this point.

The word baptize we are informed

is a Greek word derived from baptizo or bapto and signifies to dip, plunge or immerse; hence the very word itself gives the explanation to any reasonable mind, especially when we remember the above comment, "went up straightway out of the water." However, in addition to the above explicit definition, we will add the testimony of three leading authors, whose veracity of character is above reproach, and who are regarded as the standard writers of sacred history and Biblical lore.

Mosheim, in his "Ecclesiastical History, vol. 1, page 129, says: "The sacrament of baptism was administered in this (first) century, without the public, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by immersion of the whole body in the baptismal font." Again, page 211, he says: "The persons [in the second century] that were to be baptized...were immersed under water, and received into Christ's kingdom by a solemn invocation of Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

Martin Luther, writing in the sixteenth century, says: "The term baptism is a Greek word: it may be rendered by dipping as when we dip anything in water that it may be entirely covered with water. I could wish that such as are to be baptized should be completely immersed into water, according to the meaning of the word and the signification of the ordinance." Here then we have the testimony of the man who gave us the first complete translation of the Bible, and from which nearly all the various tongues of Christendom have copied, and which is to-day regarded by many as the most perfect translation.

Robison, the great philologist and Biblical scholar, says: "The native Greeks must understand their own language better than foreigners, and they have always understood the word baptism to signify dipping; and therefore, from their first embracing of Christianity to this day, they have always baptized, and do yet baptize by immersion." Here, then, we have the testimony of one of the most eminent authors, that the people through whose tongue we have

received the Bible, define the word to mean immersion, and that "they have always baptized, and do yet baptize by immersion," the custom handed down among this people from the days of Christ. We have, therefore, the testimony of three of the most eminent men whose names have graced the pages of ecclesiastical history, that immersion was and is the proper mode of baptism. Let us now see what further evidence we can glean from the New Testament to substantiate this fact.

We read in the 3rd chapter St. John, 23rd verse, "And John was also baptizing in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there; and they came, and were baptized." Now, had sprinkling or pouring been the correct process, would it have been necessary for the people to go out to the river Ænon to be baptized, "because there was much water there?" The sprinkling process would take barely a few drops, while pouring, at the most, but a teacupful, a quantity of water which might have been procured and the act performed where the people lived. Paul in his epistle to the Romans, vi: 3, 4, says: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should also walk in newness of life." Had baptism been performed by sprinkling or pouring, Paul would have made a great mistake in comparing baptism to the burial of Christ, but when we remember the correct form of baptism the simile is beautiful, because we are buried in the water as Christ was buried in the earth, and we emerge again out of the water as Christ, when he arose from the grave. In the case of the baptism of the eunuch by Philip, we read, Acts viii: 38, 39: "And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." From

these three places of baptism, *i. e.* in the Jordan, Ænon, and this last by the roadside, we learn the undeniable fact that baptism was performed under the free canopy of heaven, the first in the largest river of Palestine, in which the people in "all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem were baptized." The second in the river Ænon, "because there was much water there;" and the third in water by the roadside, into which both Philip and the eunuch descended, and after the baptism "came up out of the water"; while Paul, to complete the chain of evidence seemingly compares it with the burial of our Savior. We think, with the previous comments and testimonies, that further observation on this point is unnecessary. There are two more items to which we will briefly refer; first, the object of baptism, secondly the subject's belief.

In St. Mark i: 4, 5, we read: "John did baptize in the wilderness and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river Jordan confessing their sins." When the people on the day of Pentecost exclaimed, "Men and brethren what shall we do?": "Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins." Acts ii: 38. Ananias, we read, told Paul, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts xxii: 16. It was, therefore, according to these three testimonies a baptism "for the remission of sins."

With respect to the next point, we read, that when the jailor said to Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved," they replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved:" then after he had been taught the Gospel of Christ, we read in the next verse, "he was baptized, he and all his, straightway." After Philip had explained the Scriptures unto the eunuch, "and preached unto him Jesus," we read that the eunuch said, "here is water what doth hinder me to be baptized?"

And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest. And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Then we are informed, "he commanded the chariot to stand still, * * * and he baptized him." These passages will sufficiently explain that in addition to repenting of their sins, it was also necessary to believe on Jesus Christ before they could be baptized, for the words of Philip, "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest," sufficiently explain that had he not done so Philip would not have baptized him. We have, therefore, now a complete pattern of the correct form of baptism, and we are therefore now prepared to ascertain, by comparison, which one of all the various sects has this correct heavenly pattern, for such alone could be entitled to the credit of being "the everlasting gospel," brought by the angel. To aid us, however, in completing this comparison we will call the attention of the reader to a passage, recorded in the 1st chapter of Galatians, and which reads as follows:

"I marvel that we are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel; which is not another but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." Luther in his translation gives us a more significant word in place of "pervert," and which, I am sorry to say, has hardly its representative in such a fitting manner in the English language. The word used by him is "verkehrt," which means, in a more general sense, *reversed*, or *turned around* or *upside down*. Within the meaning of these two words "perverted" and "verkehrt" let us see if we can find any gospels in which this holy ordinance, baptism, is "perverted or verkehrt." It is not our object to, in the least degree malign or misrepresent any one church; but as these churches all profess to be the true churches of Christ, crying "come here, lo! here is Christ," or, "go there for lo! there is Christ," and as we are in search of truth, it will be our imperative duty to select one as an example; but in doing so, we do not design in the least degree to wound the feelings of him who

sincerely believes that his church is the correct one, and who prefers its rites and ordinances to the correct heavenly pattern. It is they that must reap the consequences and not the humble author of this article. And as the Catholic church is the most prevalent, and her form of baptism has been adopted by her Protestant reformers as the correct one, we deem it proper and most fitting to select her.

As has been shown, our Savior, the people of Judea and Jerusalem were baptized in the river Jordan, the largest river in the country, and also others in the river of Ænon. The Catholic church and her Protestant reformers baptize in churches where it would be absurd to even speak of a river. Baptisms were performed in those days in rivers, "because there was much water there; this church and her reformers baptize with a few drops, scarcely enough to moisten the parched lips of the rich man who raised up his eyes in hell, being in torment. Christ and the people of Judea and Jerusalem were immersed or buried in the water; this church and her reformers sprinkle a few drops of water in the face, while the whole amount contained in the basin is often scarcely enough to bury the hand of the child, to say nothing of burying the whole body. Our Savior, the people of Judea, Paul, the eunuch as well as the "men and women" whom Philip also baptized, were grown to manhood or womanhood, and therefore in full possession of their reasoning faculties; this church and her reformers baptize little newborn babes of whom it would be absurd to even speak of reasoning faculties. Christ, we are told in Mark x: 16, took little children in His arms, put His hands upon them and blessed them; lo and behold! the priests of this church and her reformers order little children to be taken up in some one's arms and instead of blessing them they baptize them; not only do they turn the ordinance squarely around, but they even fail to do as the Savior did, *i. e.* to take up the children in their own arms. Our Savior, the people of Judea and Jerusalem as well as the eunuch went out to the rivers Jordan and

Ænon, desiring to be baptized of John. This church and her reformers carry their subjects of baptism to the church, because they are only newborn babes, and force their man-made doctrine of baptism upon them, without the subjects having the least knowledge of it. The Savior was baptized because he desired to fulfill all righteousness, or, in other words, the law of God; this church and her reformers baptize little beings that have not the least shadow of the knowledge of the law of God. The people of Judea and Jerusalem, and those to whom Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, as well as Paul, were baptized for the remission of their sins, after they had repented of them; the subjects of these churches are helpless infants who have never raised a hand, foot, nor voice to commit sin; they have certainly never coveted anybody's wife, or house, or property, neither have they stolen, or spoken lies, or borne false witness against their neighbors, much less committed the greater sins of whoredom or murder. Christ as well as all the people who received this ordinance in a similar manner, could forever recollect, at least as long as they retained their full reasoning faculties, that they had made a covenant with God through baptism; the subjects of these churches know nothing about it only as some one tells them. The eunuch and the jailor had to believe in Christ before they were baptized; the subjects of these churches can have no idea of Him. Our Savior died for the original sin, or Adam's transgression, thus freeing all mankind from this sin, and holding each one responsible for the sins he himself commits, subject to remission on certain conditions, thereby estab-

lishing the grand principle of the Atonement; this church and her reformers when questioned why they baptize innocent babes, tell us that they baptize them for hereditary sins, thus denying the atoning blood of Christ and substituting for it a false baptism, nowhere mentioned in the Bible.

With these facts staring us in the face, we will leave each one to conclude for himself as to whether we have found "perverted" or "reversed" ordinances of the true gospel as established by the Savior and His Apostles; we will also let each one determine for himself whether he can afford to place his salvation in jeopardy upon such a false man-made ordinance, which has nothing but the bare name, and it even belied or misrepresented. They should, however, remember the words of the Savior, already quoted in another part, "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men:" while to the priests and ministers performing these ordinances and preaching these gospels we feel it to be our duty to quote the remaining words of Paul: "But there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. i: 7, 8, 9).

These gospels cannot therefore be "the everlasting gospel," for they are the opposite of that which Paul preached, and we must therefore look elsewhere for it.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

CONTENTS.

The Ladies' Appeal	225	Emigration	233
Correspondence — Letter from Elder Henry Walsh	230	In Classic Lands	235
Utah News	231	The Book of Mormon, and the End of the World	235
Editorial.—Agreeable News	232		

EDITED, PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY DANIEL H. WELLS, 42, ISLINGTON, LIVERPOOL.

FOR SALE ALSO IN ALL THE CONFERENCES OF THE CHURCH IN GREAT BRITAIN