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The Book of Mormon, and the End of the World

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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 fifth part covers the organization of the Church.

ference, with a good prospect for six more in a short time. Elder Woolley then read the Statistical and Financial reports of the Conference, which were unanimously received and approved. He also presented the General and local Authorities of the Church, who were sustained by unanimous vote.

"The afternoon meeting convened at 2 p.m. and was addressed by Elder Stevenson and President Wells. The subjects treated upon were the unpopularity of the Gospel in all ages of the world, and the fulfillment of prophecy in the establishment of God's kingdom in the last days and in the history of the Latter-day Saints.

"The evening meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. and was addressed by Elders Henry Lunt, W. F. Rigby, Richard J. Nuttal, Robert S. Campbell, E. T. Woolley and President Wells.

"The weather was very fine during Conference and five children were blessed by President Wells. There was a very good attendance all day, especially of the Saints, and all had an enjoyable feast of spiritual blessings."

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

BY ELDER L. F. MONCH.

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

The religious sects in the days of the Savior did not enjoy that gift. Hence we read: "Then certain of the Scribes and of the Pharisees answered saying, 'Master, we would see a sign.' (Matt. xii: 38). Again: 'The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came and tempting him desired him that He would show them a sign from heaven.' (Matt. xvi: 1). Among them signs and wonders were as little known as they are to-day. The conclusion, therefore, is, that these sects, elders, high priests and their followers believed and worshiped a God as the various religious sects and denominations do to-day, but that they denied His power, *i. e.* dreams, visions, speaking in tongues, prophecies, casting out devils and the healing of the sick, just as the various sects to-day deny those gifts, declaring they have been done away and that God manifests no more His approval of acceptable worship unto Him by bestowing the gift of the Holy Ghost, which leads into all truth and shows things to come, thus actually in addition to the before-mentioned signs, making prophets of those who had

received that gift. And the reason is obvious; those sects as we have already proven, either did not comply with the law of baptism, or else deviated from the proper established form as revealed from heaven; in which condition our sects and denominations also find themselves in to-day.

There are other ordinances such as the sacrament, anointing with oil, the washing of feet, etc., but as it would continue this article too long, we will pass by them and take up the organization of the Church as revealed from heaven by the Father, and established by His Son, our Lord and Savior, and His Apostles.

On examining the New Testament carefully, we find that the Church of Jesus Christ was a regularly organized body of officers and members, holding certain keys and powers, through the agency of which the gifts and blessings of God were bestowed upon the members of the Church, each one in his respective position and calling.

It is now our intention to give a careful review of this organization, commencing with the head and con-

tinuing to the least or lay member. This we consider absolutely necessary for two reasons; first to show the contrast between the true Church and the then opposing sects or churches, in order to enable us to find a key by which we can test the present sects or religious denominations; and secondly for the true pattern with which to compare the "everlasting gospel," which this angel is to bring from heaven in the last days, so that we may not be deceived.

APOSTLE AND HIGH PRIEST.

Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, writes, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him; as also Moses was faithful in all his house;" and further on he says: "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Hebrews, iii: 1, 2, and v, 4, 5, 6.) According to Paul's testimony, as above quoted, the first officer of this grand organization was called "Apostle and High Priest," and further that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was, in that dispensation, the first personage who occupied this place, and that this name and responsible position was given to him by our Father in heaven.

TWELVE APOSTLES.

With respect to this organization, we read: "And it came to pass in those days that he (Jesus) went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve whom also he named apostles." (St. Luke, vi: 12, 13). The 17th chapter of St. John throws still more light upon this subject, showing us from what source this selection had come. The whole chapter should be carefully read, as it is nearly all devoted to an earnest prayer and sup-

plication in behalf of these twelve men. We will only quote one or two verses: "Holy Father keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." (11, 12). These passages show us that this second order of the Priesthood was like the first, established by our Father in heaven through His Son Jesus Christ.

Now in view of the fact that some divines claim that this organization, the quorum of the Twelve, had only an existence in the time of the Savior, and that it subsequently ceased to be a part of the true organization of the Church of Jesus Christ, let us pursue this subject a little further, and see if this is a correct conclusion.

After the death of the Savior, he appeared to His disciples, the Twelve, in His resurrected body and informed them, "All power is given me in heaven and in earth"; and Luke in his Acts of the Apostles, i: 1, 2, says: "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus both began to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost, had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen." This "instruction," therefore, emanated from the Godhead, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and hence what the Apostles afterward did in continuing the work of organization would be by divine authority.

Let us see then what the first thing was that the Apostles did after our Savior had ascended to heaven.

Further on in the same chapter before referred to we are told that the eleven met together in an upper room, for the purpose of electing a new disciple in place of Judas, who, through transgression had fallen, leaving the quorum imperfect. After prayer, we are told, they presented two names, Barnabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias, from which the selection was to be made.

A second prayer was then offered, which reads as follows: "Thou Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." In the next verse we are told: "And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." Acts, 1st chapter.

From this it appears that the first act necessary after the ascension of the Savior was to restore this quorum to its original number; and that it was not immaterial as to the number that composed this body, for we are told that they presented two to the Lord, from which the selection was to be made; they themselves considered them both worthy of this position, or else they would not have presented them both, and hence had their feelings been consulted they would undoubtedly have taken them both upon the principle that in the multitude of counsel there is safety; but when they called upon the Lord to show "which of the two *thou* hast chosen," the lot fell upon Matthias; it was again a quorum of twelve Apostles.

In the 12th chapter, 2d verse, we read of the death of another Apostle, James the brother of John, beheaded, as we are informed, by Herod, leaving again eleven as in the case of Judas. But, in Galatians, 1st chapter, Paul tells us of a new Apostle, chosen undoubtedly to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of James, the brother of John.

But, says an objector, this organization was simply kept up as long as there were eye witnesses of the ministry, sufferings, death and resurrection of our Savior; and after those men passed away this organization was no longer necessary. We would ask such men what of Paul who everywhere styles himself an Apostle, yet he confessed he never saw the Savior till after His resurrection?

"Paul, though he was not an eye witness of the Savior's ministry, death and resurrection, became an Apostle unto Christ; and if he could thus be added to

the quorum without being an eye witness, others could also be called to fill vacancies; and the quorum could have continued to the present time, had not the church been driven into the wilderness."

SEVENTIES.

The next organization instituted by the Savior was a quorum of seventies, and from the nature of the remarks, we would infer that he organized more than one quorum. Their duties appear to have been similar to those of the Twelve, viz: to preach the Gospel, with this exception, the Twelve had unlimited authority to go and preach while the seventies were messengers sent to prepare the way; secondary, therefore, as one would suppose, to the Twelve. The short historical sketch of this body of men reads as follows: "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come." (St. Luke x: 1). Then follow the instructions which were similar to those given to the Twelve with the above mentioned exception.

When the Savior passed from this world He did not take with Him the keys and authority to administer in the ordinances of the church, but He bestowed them upon Peter and the Twelve; hence we read: "And I will give unto thee (Peter) the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. xvi: 19). Of the Twelve, after His resurrection, it is written: "And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye retain they are retained." (John xx: 23, 29). This power was not given to the Seventies so far as we can learn from the scriptures; and as all natural conclusions would teach us, if the keys which the Savior held were bestowed upon Peter and the Twelve, these men the Seventies, in all probability, continued their labors under the direction of this newly delegated power, for the work of proselyting

did not cease, but if anything assumed broader fields for it now went to the Gentiles. And if the death of our Savior did not effect the disorganization of the Twelve, the Seventies in like manner continued in their sphere, and if anything perhaps received additional impetus in their labors, and thus the work still rolled on.

ELDERS.

Of this organization or order of the Priesthood, we read in the Acts of the Apostles, xiv : 23, as follows : "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believed." And Peter in his 1st Epistle v : 1, 2, 3, explains the duties of these men ; he says : "The elders which are among you, I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed : feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly ; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind ; neither as being Lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." Their duties therefore were different to those of the Apostles and Seventies ; while these were compelled to be traveling about, having no sure abiding place as Paul informs us, the elders were to feed the flock and take the oversight thereof ; in other words they were located wherever there were branches of the church, taking the oversight thereof and teaching the people, *but not for money* as Peter here pointedly observes.

BISHOPS.

Paul begins his epistle to the Philippians as follows : "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi with the bishops and deacons." Again to Timothy he writes : "This is a true saying : If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." And in his epistle to Titus he explains the duties of this office : "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God ; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre." (i : 7). A *steward*, according to the common acceptance of the term, is an officer who has charge

of, or is a manager of a business for another party. A "steward of God," therefore is an agent of God, or one who attends to the temporal matters of His kingdom. And this shows a most beautiful and complete organization, proving that our Father in heaven, not only provided for the spiritual welfare of the Church, but also for the temporal, and hence he provided this officer for this duty.

DEACONS.

As will be observed in the first two quotations of the preceding paragraph, the deacon is immediately connected with the bishop ; and according to the writings of Paul, this was no mean or ignoble position ; he says : "Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre. Holding the mystery of faith in a good conscience. And let these also first be proved ; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless." (1st Tim., iii, 8, 12). As we have proven the office of a bishop to be that of a steward, and as the deacons are at least in two places mentioned in connection with the bishops, and also as their qualifications are similarly described, it is presumable that their duties were to labor with these officers in the discharge of their temporal duties in the kingdom, and as also we would infer from their names and as the world has generally defined their calling.

TEACHERS.

We read in Acts xiii : 1 : "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers ; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul." As the teachers and the prophets are here mentioned together, it is difficult to tell what the particular duties of these men were ; but from the nature of the name they had something to do with teaching the people, but in what particular capacity or sphere the Bible fails to tell us. The term

PROPHETS

is also mentioned in a number of places, but like the teachers with no further definition ; the two orders

were associated together in the above incident.

PRIESTS.

John, the Revelator, speaks also of this order in a number of places, but as in the case of the teachers and prophets, their duties are not defined.

EVANGELISTS.

These officers are mentioned in two places, in one of which Paul somewhat vaguely defines their duties. He says: "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist; make full proof of thy ministry." (2 Tim., 4, 5). According to modern definition an evangelist is regarded as a writer of the history of our Lord Jesus

Christ; hence we read of the four evangelists—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

The organization, therefore, of the church was beautiful and complete, corresponding to the organization of the human body; for as the organization of the body is not spiritual nor temporal alone, but a dual being, composed of spirit and matter, so it appears our Father in heaven devised a plan similar in its form, effect and operations to this dual being which it is designed to save; and thus the church of God was complete and perfect in its organization.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

UTAH NEWS.

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(Summarized from Territorial Papers.)

The *Utah Journal* says that times generally seem to be improving.

Lucern fields in Mill Creek have been much injured during the past winter by field mice.

Provo was expecting a big business boom in consequence of the General Conference being held there.

Burglaries have been common of late in Ogden, committed, it is supposed, by a gang of transient marauders.

The Salt Lake City sexton's report for the month of March last records a total of 45 deaths, eight of which were from diphtheria.

Brother James Townsend, a well known and highly esteemed citizen of Utah, died in Salt Lake City on the 3rd inst., in the 80th year of his age. He was for a long time proprietor of the leading hotel in Salt Lake City.

On the 29th ult. the remaining bonds of President George Q. Cannon were declared forfeited through his non-appearance in court. It is expected that the forfeiture will be contested, owing to the excessive amount of the bonds.

The Provo Manufacturing Company have declared a dividend of nearly 4 per cent. on the last half year's business, besides carrying \$5,000 surplus profits to the reserve funds. The woolen mills are doing a good business, and their products are steadily gaining in favor.

There is in every man a severe censor of his manners; and he that reverences this judge will seldom do anything of which he need repent.

The following is an Arabic proverb taken down from the mouth of an Oriental—"Men are four. (1) He who knows not, and knows not he knows not. He is a fool; shun him. (2) He who knows not, and knows he knows not. He is simple; teach him. (3) He who knows, and knows not he knows. He is asleep; wake him. (4) He who knows, and knows he knows. He is wise; follow him."