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## Inspiration the Cause of Popular Opposition

Author(s): James E. Talmage

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**Abstract:** This article discusses how some reject the Book of Mormon on account of its supernatural origin. Joseph Smith claimed that an angel revealed to him where to find the plates and that God inspired him in translating them. However, the Book of Mormon is harmonious with the Bible, and the story of its origin should not surprise anyone.

# Inspiration the Cause of Popular Opposition

*By Elder James E. Talmage, of the Council of the Twelve*

The announcement of such a discovery as that of the plates of Mormon, and of such an achievement as the translation of the records into English, could not fail to attract the attention of both layman and scholar. But the announcement was treated with contempt and vigorous denunciation.

The reason for this hostile rejection is found in the fact that Joseph Smith, the translator, avowed that he had not accomplished the marvelous work by his own or other human power alone, but that the resting place of the ancient plates had been revealed to him by an angel, who appeared in light and glory, and announced himself as that same Moroni who had sealed up and buried the inscribed plates over fourteen centuries earlier. A further cause for the popular opposition to the Book of Mormon lay in Joseph Smith's solemn testimony that he had been empowered to make the translation through the direct inspiration of God.

This avowal introduced the element of the supernatural. If Joseph Smith spoke truly, miracles had not ceased, and direct revelation from God to man was of modern certainty. Such a conception was wholly opposed by theological theory and churchly dogma. And yet, why in reason should direct revelation from the heavens be more of an improbability today than in the centuries of long ago? Except as to the extent of the writing, is the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon any more a marvel than the inspired reading of the mystic words by Daniel in the midst of Belshazzar's riotous feast? (See Dan. 5:25-31.) And surely the means by which the writing was done appears far more mysterious in the case of the Chaldean king than in the ordinary and human way of engraving the Book of Mormon plates.

The Book of Mormon is before the world. It has been distributed in large numbers in English and other modern tongues. Let it be understood that in no sense does the Book of Mormon profess to be a substitute for the Holy Bible, or to be in any way related thereto except as a parallel volume of scripture. The Bible is essentially a record of the dealing of God with his people in the East; the Book of Mormon is an embodiment of Divine revelations to the people of the West. So far as the two books touch common themes they are in harmony; and in no particular are they contradictory to each other.