



*"Your word is a lamp to my feet  
And a light to my path."  
Psalm 119:105*

## *"Five Questions if You're a Mormon"*

by Jacob Prasch



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Hello, friends, my name is Jacob Prasch and I have met a number of Mormons. I have attended the “Miracle of Mormonism” pageant in Manti, Utah where I met mainstream Mormons and I met fundamentalism Mormons – polygamists, bigamists. I’ve met Mormons in Great Britain, I’ve met Mormons in Italy, I’ve met Mormons in Israel, an extension of Brigham Young University. I have talked to Mormon clergy. And I know how anxious Mormons are to see people convert to Mormonism, to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as they call it. They’re anxious in their missionary zeal to establish new “stakes”, as you call them, new stakes and to see the beliefs of Mormonism extend and perpetuate.

When anyone comes to me trying to persuade me to believe in a religion, I always examine it carefully and prayerfully, and I look at it and I consider their claims with a fair and open mind. And Mormonism is no different. I considered your religion with a fair and open mind and I have actually investigated it. I have read, I’ve talked to Mormons, I’ve read what the Mormons have told me in light of the Judeo-Christian Bible, and in my interest to pursue the truth and to find out if the Church of Latter-day Saints is true, I’ve made some discoveries from a variety of sources including your own literature – **especially** your own literature – and as a result of this I have some serious questions.

I hope in listening to this you'll be able to help me answer these questions. Just e-mail me at our ministry, my office, and I would love to hear from you. Or you can write me at either the American or British or Australian office, and I'll be more than happy to get back to you. In fact I'll be delighted to talk to you. Come on our website, send me an e-mail, answer these questions.

The person who directed you here is also interested in having these questions answered. We felt it's right to give you as a Mormon the opportunity to answer for yourself.

## **How Can I Believe What Your Own Scientists Do Not?**

The first question I have is this: In my youth I studied biomedical science and something has developed now that was in its sub-infancy when I was a student. It is mitochondrial

DNA which no one was sure even existed until fairly recently. It is not in the nucleus. When I was in university we were told there was RNA, but not deoxyribonucleic acid in the cytoplasm, it was all in the nucleus; only RNA was known to be in the cytoplasm. People began to speculate that you could have in the mitochondria of cells, mitochondria like the power houses of the cells where the work is actually done, the biochemical level, it's where metabolism takes place for the most part, we have a form of DNA that is non-mutative because it does not go through the nucleus. And it will go from generation to generation to generation as long as you get a good strand.

The *Book of Mormon* has the fundamental teaching of two ancient Jewish tribes arriving, one about 600 B.C., in North America or Central America. They had a war – Nephi and the tribe that became known as the Lamanites – and the Lamanites won. The sinful tribe had won. And God punished them for their sin by darkening their complexion, making it reddish – red Indians. Yet they defeated the tribe who'd been faithful, for some reason, so the book of Mormon tells us. This is fundamental to their beliefs. When Jesus said, "I have other sheep not of this fold", (Jn. 10:16) He came to North American Indians.

Anthropologists, however, have long speculated that North American Indians were people who crossed the Bering Straits from Siberia. They were Asians who came from Siberia down via Alaska, Canada, and into North America, and from there to Central and South America. Some people like Thor Heyerdahl tried to prove they could have crossed the Atlantic, but essentially the anthropologists disagreed.

One of the benefits of mitochondrial DNA is its capacity to conclusively prove ancestry. There were a number of Mormon scientists, specifically microbiologists and biochemists, who were well-versed in biogenetic engineering who are interviewed on a video I watched about DNA and the *Book of Mormon*. Some of them had been apologists or advisors to the Mormon apologetics society called "FARMS" at Brigham Young University, but these were Ph.D. scientists, all Mormon. And they were interviewed and they looked at the evidence independently. These Mormon scientists said the following: "Mitochondrial DNA absolutely and conclusively proves from all the specimens taken all over Canada, North America, United States, Central and South America from dozens of

Indian tribes that these people have the same mitochondrial DNA as people from Siberia.”

There is nothing in common with Semitic DNA. We can look at Jewish DNA, we can look at Sephardic-Jewish DNA, Yemanite-Jewish DNA, we can even look at Arab DNA, Persian DNA, other Semitic DNA, but the mitochondrial structures are different. The nucleotides just don't add up, The sequence is completely – **completely** – of another strain of people. Racially and ethnically it cannot be the case. And these Mormon scientists said on the basis of the mitochondrial DNA evidence that they can no longer accept the *Book of Mormon* as factually true in its historicity. Some of them work with mitochondrial DNA in their own secular work all the time. A few of them have been honest enough to say there have **always** been questions about the personal honesty of Joseph Smith, who of course was accused of being a swindler and was killed in the aftermath of an alleged swindle in America back in the 19th Century.

My question to you, my friend – and I'm speaking to you as a friend, not as an enemy – if Mormon scientists, if Latter-day Saints scientists – some of them from Brigham Young University – people who are involved actively in microbiology about biogenetic engineering have considered the mitochondrial DNA evidence and have arrived at the same conclusion as non-Mormon microbiologists, that the anthropologists are proven right and vindicated, that North American Indians cannot be from an ancient Semitic people who were Jewish who were called “Lamanites”, but in fact are descended from the same people who presently inhabit Siberia, how can you expect me to believe the *Book of Mormon* when your own scientists say its credibility has been made into Swiss cheese?

I'm just asking a question. I invite you to watch the video. If you're in Utah, go to Salt Lake City to the Lighthouse. You'll find it in the yellow pages or on the Internet. They'll give you a copy of the video. If you really want to see a copy, e-mail us. If you're a Mormon, e-mail us; we'll make sure someone meets with you and shows you a copy.

That's my question. The belief that the Lamanites were ancient Jews and there were people arriving about 600 B.C., how can you possibly say that is correct when the mitochondrial DNA says otherwise and your own scientists – Ph.D. scientists – so acknowledge it? It's a fair question, the believability, the plausibility of the fundamental premise of the *Book of Mormon*.

You claim to be the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Let's see what the last thing Jesus Christ said in the New Testament because as Mormons, of course, you believe in the King James Bible. The last thing Jesus said in the book of Revelation 22 is that anyone who adds to this book, God will add to them the plagues that are in the book. (Rev. 22:18) Now that does not only apply to the book of Revelation, Moses was told the same thing – “Do not add to the words”. (Dt. 4:2) First Corinthians 4:6 says the same thing, “Do not exceed what is written” in the Judeo-Christian Bible. And of course in Matthew 15, Jesus said the same thing, “Do not teach other doctrine other than what's there, they're the inventions of men”. (Mt. 15:1-14)

The *Book of Mormon* must add to the New and Old Testaments in order for the Church of Latter-day Saints to exist. And fundamental to it, it claims this story of the Lamanites being ancient Hebrews. But your own scientists say otherwise. Please answer my question: How can you expect me to believe something your own scientists do not?

### **Do You Really Believe That & Expect Me to Believe It?**

But I have a second question. I've read a number of Mormon books: *The Pearl of Great Price*, *The Book of Moses*, and *The Book of Abraham*, which the Mormons claim to be divine revelation. However, Egyptologists – people who can read hieroglyphics in Britain and America and as well as in France have looked at this book which Joseph Smith claimed he was given wisdom how to translate. So we have Joseph Smith's translation of it, but we also have the original of it which he acquired somehow. (There are different stories as to how.) Every Egyptologist who has read it says it is an ancient funeral rite and has nothing whatsoever vaguely resembling Joseph Smith's translation of it.

I can read Greek well enough to tell which translations of the New Testament are accurate and which ones are not so accurate. I can read Hebrew well enough to tell which translations of the Old Testament are accurate and which ones are inaccurate. I can read Spanish well enough to tell which translation of the *El Cid* or *Don Quixote* are accurate and which one isn't. I can read French well enough to tell which translations or Voltaire's *Candide* are good and which ones aren't. I'm not a linguist, I'm not a language expert, but I can speak a few languages and read a few languages, and I can tell what's accurate; at least **basically** accurate, and what isn't. Some languages I do better than others, but these are Egyptologists. These are people who don't make mistakes. The most they would have are discrepancies in professional opinion, but they would still agree on one thing: Joseph Smith's mistranslation is completely bogus; it's about a funeral rite. How can you believe it? But more to the point, how can you expect **others** to believe it?

Whenever I have shown this to Mormons they could not really respond except with their testimony because Mormons have said their testimony is supposed to be irrefutable, words to the effect that quote/unquote, "You have a burning in your bosom and you testified to me that the Church of Latter-day Saints is true". Does the burning in your bosom testify to you that a funeral rite is what Joseph Smith mistranslated it as? Does the burning in your bosom really testify to you that the microbiologists are wrong including your own? It's a fair question.

You know, you can find Islamic terrorists who will commit suicide in what they call a "Jihad". We can argue with them saying it's not rational. They can give you a subjective argument, "I believe it is". I once saw a Buddhist monk on television in Saigon pour kerosene on his head and light a match. He was about the most sincere man I ever saw in my life. You can be sincere and be sincerely wrong. Other religions would say the same thing, they have a burning in their bosom and they testify to you that the Tibetan *Book of the Dead* is true, or the *Bhagavad-Gita* is true, or the Quran is true, but does that make it true because someone claims to have a burning in their bosom, or indeed **may have** a burning in their bosom? I don't believe someone would immolate themselves if they did not have a burning in their bosom.

When I was in Manti, Utah I saw people from the Church of Latter-day Saints all wearing T-shirts and sweatshirts. Printed on these shirts was the following statement: “Brigham Young said it, I believe it, that settles it,” So because he said it, you believe it, and that settles it. So I decided to see what it was he said that they believe and the matter is settled.

I was reading through *The Journal of Discourses* of Brigham Young. One of the most interesting things I found were in volume 17 of *The Journal of Discourses* of Brigham Young, where Joseph Smith is cited as having said there were Quakers who lived on the moon. They dressed like Quakers and lived to be 1,000 years old. Brigham Young not only affirmed this, but said that there are such people also residing on the Sun. You people are not stupid or uneducated, deal with the issue. Brigham Young said it? You believe it? That settles it? Do you really believe there’s Quakers living on the moon? Do you really believe there are people just like Quakers who live to be 1,000 years old who reside on the Sun? He said it, do you believe it? Does that really settle it? That’s my question, do you **really** believe that and do you really expect **me** to believe that?

Personally I find it very, **very** difficult to believe that there are people living on the Sun dressed like Quakers living to be 1,000 years old. Please tell me why I should believe it. Many of you people are educated, you’ve been to Brigham Young University, some of you have postgraduate educations, you seem clean-cut, nice, honest people – if you are, that is my question. How can **you** believe it and how can you expect **me** to believe it? I’m not mocking you, I’m not mocking your religion, I simply am wanting to know about its credibility, its believability.

Now don't get me wrong. If there’s really Quakers on the moon I will want to believe it, but I don't think there is. Your religion says because Brigham Young said there is there must be and that settles it. Well it settles it for you, but if it settles it for you can you show me why it should be settled for me? Do you really believe it and do you really think it is plausible for other people to believe it? It’s an honest question in *The Journal of Discourses*.

## Is the Doctrine of Atonement Unchangeable?

But I have yet another question for my Mormon friends. The question is on Brigham Young's doctrine of atonement. Brigham Young's doctrine of atonement said that the doctrine of atonement cannot be changed. Now don't get me wrong. I agree with mainstream Mormons that the fundamentalist Mormons, the Temple Lot Mormons and the other ones, are bizarre in what they believe and say and do. However, in reading the original writings of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, they do seem to be the true Mormons – the bigamists and the polygamists. They are actually doing what Brigham Young did. Brigham Young had 23 wives thereabout?

When I met these fundamental Mormons in Manti, Utah, one had 8 wives. He walked up the street with them – completely illegal in that state – and I wondered what kind of a woman would share her husband with 7 other women. I discovered what kind would: An underage woman from a fundamentalist Mormon family herself. They were engaging in acts that were legally considered pedophilia by the mainstream Mormons. When they were challenged – not by me but by other Mormons, the other Mormons challenged them – they said, “What are we doing that Brigham Young didn't do?” That was a fair question. But my concern was not their bigamy or their polygamy – some even had polyany, multiple husbands -- my concern was the doctrine of atonement.

Bigamy and polygamy were outlawed after the leadership of the Church of Latter-day Saints said they had a new revelation and they shouldn't do it anymore at a time when the institution of bigamy and polygamy was preventing Utah from becoming a state in the United States. It'd only been a territory after it tried to become an independent republic and the military came and there was a war – a shoot-out. So all of the sudden now it became monogamous. In the 1960's when the civil rights movement came along, all of a sudden black people could now be Mormon priests. Previously they couldn't. It seems they have a revelation at convenient times in history when the social pressures, or political ones – legal ones, demand it. But the doctrine of atonement was one that your Brigham Young said could not be changed.

Do you really believe as Mormonism teaches, that black people are the descendents of fallen angels cast out of heaven? And do you believe what Brigham Young said in the doctrine of atonement, that black people are ugly, mischievous, depraved, of low intelligence (and a number of other things too rude to mention), and that any Mormon who marries one must be killed, and this doctrine of atonement cannot be changed? Black people are ugly, mischievous, depraved, etc. and by “black” not only people of African descent, anybody that’s dark-skinned, and any Mormon who marries one must be killed. That is the Mormon doctrine of atonement. Brigham Young said it, you believe it, that settles it?

Do you really believe he was right? Do you believe black people are the descendants of angels cast out of heaven because they wouldn't choose between Christ and Satan? Do you really believe that there’s something wrong with them inherently, that they’re ugly, mischievous, depraved, and that if a Mormon marries one they should be killed? Brigham Young said this doctrine can never be changed. Well if he said it, that should settle it, you should believe it. Do you really believe it? Is that settled in your mind? And do you really think I should believe it? Do you really believe the doctrine of atonement and do you really think that I should believe it? That is my question. I think it's a fair one and a necessary one.

So far I'm asking you when mitochondrial DNA says “no Lamanites”, Middle Eastern Semitic or Jewish origin, rather the anthropological origins are from Siberia of North American and Central and South American Indians, and your own scientists admit it, if they don't believe then why should I and why should you? That's my first question.

My second question is reading things in *The Journal of Discourses* that I've only given you one example of something that seemed strange, do you really believe there's Quakers on the moon and on the Sun, and do you really expect me to believe it? Do you really, **really** expect me to believe a funeral rite mistranslated into something else by Joseph Smith, that has no relation to what it actually says in the Bible. The Bible is specific about nations, kingdoms and when the archeologists have dug – and I've lived in Israel for a number of years – they have found these cities, many of them. They've

found Meggido, they've found Timnah, they found Tel-Hazor where the Bible says they were, and they find coins. Where is one single coin from any of these ancient civilizations given the fact that the coins of these ancient American civilizations are named in the *Book of Mormon*; where are they? The pre-Columbian history department of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, DC, the national museum of the United States, says there is no, absolutely **no**, archaeological evidence for the claim of the *Book of Mormon*. But I'm expected to believe it. Please tell me why. The archeological record supports the Bible.

Now I know the *Book of Mormon* is written in the language of the King James Bible, only the King James Bible is a translation of Greek and Hebrew. In fact, it's a translation of a translation. What language is the King James? It's 17<sup>th</sup> Century English. It's not the original. *The Book of Mormon* is made to look like the King James and that kind of language. but where is the evidence?

### **How Can Jesus Be the Half-Brother of Satan?**

And reading *The Book of Mormon*, I'm brought to one other question. I'm told that Jesus is the half-brother of Satan and that Adam was God. As man is God was, and as God is man shall become. That is the fundamental tenet of Mormonism. Adam was God. (The book of Genesis says that Adam was created by God.) And that Jesus is the half-brother of Satan. Satan wanted to rule the world by force, Jesus wanted to rule it by love, and the angels who wouldn't take sides were cast down and they became the black people. That's your religion's teaching.

The Greek word is "*monogenes*". It doesn't mean "only born", "only begotten" in the sense of "*monogenes*" means "only of a kind". If Jesus is the "only begotten" Son of God, the **only** "*monogenes*", how can Satan be his half-brother if He's the only one? Can you please answer me how can Satan be the half-brother of Jesus if Jesus is the "only begotten"? No one has so far been able to answer that question for me from your religion. Can you answer it? How can He be the half-brother of Satan if He's the "only begotten"?

## Have You Kept the Celestial Law?

I have a fifth and final question. Your religion teaches there are three heavens, as it were: The “telestial”, the “terrestrial”, and the “celestial”. Those who are Christians but are not Mormons will be in the terrestrial; those who are not even that will be in the telestial, as it were, condemned; but those who follow the teachings of the Church of Latter-day Saints will be in the celestial kingdom. But to arrive in the celestial kingdom you must keep the celestial law, which requires perfection – **sinless** perfection. Not only utter sanctification, but something beyond that because according to the celestial law once you achieve it, if you sin, all your other merits of everything you've accomplished are counted null and void. This “perfection” – how can you get this perfection?

Can you find me a single Mormon – a bishop, a priest, I don't care who he is – one who has never sinned as a Mormon? The New Testament says **all** have sinned, **all** fall short of the glory of God. (Rom. 3:23) If we say we haven't. we are a liar according to First John. (1 Jn. 1:10) Can you show me one who has achieved this? Because in order to enter the celestial kingdom you **must** achieve it. Now the New Testament says no one has ever achieved such a standard except Christ. Are you sure you are without any sin when the Scriptures say **all** have sinned, **all** full short of the glory of God? “None is righteous, no not one.” (Rom. 3:10) Are you sure that you're the exception, that you've kept the celestial law? How can you be assured of salvation? That's an important question.

I am told that Mormonism stresses family values and morality, and that its prophets and revelators like Mr. Hinckley have a direct relationship with God that others don't have. If you remember *The Salamander Text*, the Mormon letters, Mr. Hinckley said they were authentic from Joseph Smith. They were proven to be forgeries and a Mormon began blowing people up with terrorist bombings to try to cover it up. Why was Mr. Hinckley wrong if the texts really were from God via Joseph Smith?

I'm looking at Utah, I have been there. I know that the Mormons strongly stress family values, family and morality, raising your children to be godly. Can you tell me, please,

why of the 50 American states plus Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia the highest suicide rate among teenagers is in Utah where 70% of the population are Mormon? What could devastate a family more than the suicide of a child, of a teenager? If your family values are so strong, can you account for the suicide rate, can you account for the reason why the highest divorce rate in America – a country riddled, rife with divorce – is in Mormon Utah? The Church of Latter-day Saints professes a higher degree and standard of morality than others. I'm willing to listen; show me the proof. Divorce, suicide? There's a problem.

We both know there are many people who are simply what you call "Jack Mormons". It is their culture. They write "LDS" – Latter-day Saints after their name to get a job or to keep one in Utah and certain Western American states but they really don't believe it. And they're made out to be bad Mormons. Are they bad Mormons because they don't believe there's Quakers living on the moon? Are they bad Mormons because they don't believe black people are ugly, depraved, and mischievous and you should be shot if you marry one of them? Are they really bad Mormons because they believe in the scientific evidence of mitochondrial DNA which is conclusive? Does that make somebody a bad Mormon? Or is a bad Mormon somebody who gets divorced or takes their own life as a child? Is a bad Mormon somebody who practices racism? Is that a bad Mormon? I only want to know. Do **you** really believe this?

## **In Summary**

If you really believe American Indians are Lamanites despite the irrefutable DNA evidence, please explain to me how. Please e-mail me; I really want to know.

If you can really explain to me why you believe and why I should believe that the Sun is inhabited by these Quaker-like people, I want to know. Please let me know.

Let me know how Satan can be the half-brother of Jesus if God has only one "only begotten" Son. I really want to know this.

Let me know how you can believe a book translated by Joseph Smith when in fact that's not what the book says.

Let me know how you can achieve sinless perfection.

Now I just want to leave you with two things. I've asked you five questions I hope you will try to answer for me. I'll get back to you, but I want to tell you first of all about another doctrine of atonement and about how you can fulfill the "celestial law" as you call it. The doctrine of atonement of Jesus Christ has nothing to do with the doctrine of atonement as taught by Brigham Young and the "Church" of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. His doctrine was Adam was **not** God, **Jesus** was God, and He was the "last Adam"; He became a man and went to the cross and in my place and in yours; and He was the substitutionary atonement for our sin; that by putting my faith in Him I am justified even though I am guilty. He rose from the dead to give me eternal life; **He** atoned for my sin; **that** is the doctrine of atonement of the New Testament. It has no resemblance to the doctrine of atonement as taught by Brigham Young.

Secondly, how can I reach sinless perfection? How can you be counted 100% sinless? There's only one way – "imputed righteousness": I have no righteousness of my own. When Jesus took my sin on the cross He gave me **His** righteousness. I can only be counted righteous according to the righteousness of God in Christ. I'm as guilty as anybody, but God counts me as having been righteous and having kept His perfect Law because His Son did it on my behalf. He gave me His righteousness; it's imputed, it's not earned, I **can't** earn it and neither can you.

There is a doctrine of atonement and there is indeed a Law of God that requires freedom from sin and sinfulness, but I cannot see how the *Book of Mormon* can fulfill either one; I see how the New Testament fulfills both.

I'm willing to talk to you. I'm willing to hear what you have to say, I'm willing to answer your questions about my doctrine of atonement and my view of the Law of God, are you willing to answer the five questions that I've asked you?

God bless you and thank you.

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