

AN EXAMINATION
of the
Joseph Smith
INSPIRED VERSION
of the Bible

Purporting to have been made by Joseph Smith, 1830-3; first published 1867 by the "Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints", and now urged by it as the best and only correct Bible.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE: Utah Mormonism holds the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants and Pearl of Great Price as its inspired books, though slurring the Bible as poorly translated and lacking many lost portions, while the other books are perfect. Eastern Mormonism, calling itself "Reorganized," claims the first three as inspired, but does not use the latter, though portions are in its other books, as noted below. Pursuing the teaching that the Bible is defective with which he began his career, the "prophet" of Mormonism, Joseph Smith, put forth the book which we are now to investigate, commonly called the "Inspired Translation" of the Bible. This book is little used in Utah; but the "Reorganized" (often called "Josephites"), both publish and urge its adoption as the very best version ever issued. If any such claim is true, everybody should know it and have the book; if false, it is dangerous, and with the book should be exposed.

The Word of God was given by Him through men who "spoke from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." (II Peter, 1:21 R. V.) It was written in two languages, with traces of others.

The best known translations of the Bible into English are the King James and the Revised versions. The former was made by forty-seven of the best Hebrew and Greek scholars of Great Britain, taking the time from 1604 to 1611; the latter by eighty English and American scholars, laboring from 1870 to 1885, the most of fifteen years; and their work was further adapted to American usages in language by our part of the Committee, and published after sixteen more years. The translation of such an immense and important book as the Bible is a tremendous task, and requires the special guidance of God lest eternal damage result from errors. One of the marvels showing such guidance in large measure is the fact that, though comparatively few Greek originals were available for study in 1604-11 and nearly 4,000 in 1870-85, with the results of over 300 more years of Biblical study as well, the ordinary reader will hardly notice the differences between the two versions, and not a single fundamental doctrine has been changed!

In utmost contrast to the above great facts is the

account which the professed "Inspired Translation" gives of its own origin. The preface says, rather ostentatiously:

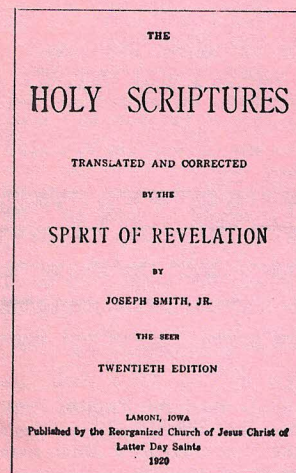
"It was begun in June, 1830, and was finished July 2, 1833."

"Joseph Smith was born in 1805, and was, at the finishing of the Mss. of this work, in the 28th year of his age."

Did Smith Know Hebrew or Greek At All?

From his "History," which he says he began writing Oct., 1835, we learn that having received some books from New York on Feb. 20, 1836, he spent the next day "at home examining the books and studying the Hebrew alphabet"—without any teacher. And even this beginning was well towards *three years after the "Inspired" was already done*; and we find no indication of any Greek study at all. They had a Hebrew teacher come later for about seven weeks. Here as elsewhere the "History" contradicts itself; saying that on the 19th they began reading their Hebrew Bibles—before the teacher had come; and a month later that they commenced translating Hebrew Bibles—this when the teacher had been there about three weeks! We doubt if any Hebrew student can believe this; it took several months for our Seminary class to get that far, and they were college educated men, knowing several languages already. Instead of being able to translate in June, 1830, nearly six years earlier, there seems to be no reason to suppose that Smith had ever seen a single letter of Hebrew or Greek, when he claims to have begun the "Inspired." A prominent Mormon writer admits that he did not know Hebrew or Egyptian when he published the Book of Mormon (Reynolds, "Story," 372). And the *Saints' Herald* of Jan. 5, 1923, editorially states that "The Inspired Version is in fact the Authorized Version [King James'] with certain corrections added by inspiration and certain omitted portions restored." This plainly and officially gives the lie to all claim of "translation" at all! The only thing left to discuss, then, is as to these so-called "corrections" and "restored" parts, of which we will soon enable the reader to judge for himself.

Title Page of "Inspired Translation."



This reduced facsimile speaks loudly of certain things, a part of which we have noticed already. Note that it claims "translation" by Smith, the young man of whom we have found that he knew nothing at all of the languages he professes thus to have translated; and that it professes "correction" of the very Word of God, given by the Holy Spirit! (II Peter 1:19-21). We present his evidence on these points on the following pages.

A Study of Some Professed Translations Presented In the Book.

The true test of a method or a work of translating lies in the results attained. "By their fruits ye shall know them" is an infallible rule. We have room for only a small fraction of the changes made by this "Inspired" book; but from the more prominent and characteristic it will be fair to judge the whole. And since the King James' and Revised Bibles are universally acknowledged by scholarship as the standard and correct translations, they must be our measure for the correctness of the "Inspired," except in case of readers who can themselves translate the originals. We will first compare some Genesis passages, then others; noting also some great doctrinal errors foisted in by the changes of the "Inspired," etc.

The moment one opens the book at Genesis he is fairly shocked to find that it begins by *adding two whole verses as Bible*, and has *changed every verse* of chapter 1 and on, without any warrant. We can compare the following, each verse by its opposite, and see just what has been done:

KING JAMES' VERSION

- Gen. 1:1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
2. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.
3. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.
4. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.
5. And God called the light Day; and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

"INSPIRED TRANSLATION"

- (Words in bold face are wrong; * indicates that words have been left out).
1. **And it came to pass, that the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Behold, I reveal unto you concerning this heaven and this earth; write the words which I speak.**
2. **I am the Beginning and the End; the Almighty God. By mine Only Begotten I created these things.**
3. **Yea, in the beginning I created the heaven, and the earth upon which thou standest.**
4. **And the earth was without form, and void; and I caused darkness to come up upon the face of the deep.**
5. **And my Spirit * moved upon the face of the water * for I am God.**
6. **And I, God, said, Let there be light, and there was light.**
7. **And I, God, saw the light, and that light was good. And I, God, divided the light from the darkness.**
8. **And I, God, called the light day, and the darkness * I called night. And this I did by the word of my power; And it was done as I spake. And the evening and the morning were the first day.**

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ: וְהָאָרֶץ אֲדָמָה
 הָיְתָה תֵהוֹ וּבְהוֹ חֹשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וּרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים
 מְרַחֶפֶת עַל־פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אוֹר וַיְהִי-
 אוֹר: וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאוֹר כִּי־טוֹב וַיְבַרֵךְ אֱלֹהִים בְּיֵם
 הָאוֹר וַיִּבֶן הַחֹשֶׁךְ: וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לְאוֹר יוֹם וּלְחֹשֶׁךְ הַ

We give here the Hebrew of Gen. 1:1-5 itself, and challenge any one to make other than the English Bible ideas out of it. Remembering that translation can mean here only taking the thought of the Hebrew Bible over into the English, note on the above passage:

1. Smith adds two whole verses before the Bible begins, as Bible; which is plain *falsifying* the Word of God! 2. He adds twenty-six other words in four verses, of which the same is true; they are plain falsehood. 3. He omits or alters several words, untruly. He has thus about *eighty words wrong* in his first eight verses, besides his omissions, in this "best" and "inspired" "translation." Clearly there is no translation at all about it. Not one of his changes has the least relation to the original words, or carries any meaning over to us from them. The real BIBLE begins with the most majestic words of all language, "IN THE BEGINNING GOD": and anything added to or taken from those words is just plain *fraud*, no matter who does it.

KING JAMES' BIBLE

Gen 2:5. For the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.

6. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

7. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

"INSPIRED TRANSLATION"

5. **For, I, the Lord God, created all things of which I have spoken, spiritually before they were naturally upon the face of the earth; for I, the Lord God, had not caused it to rain upon the face of the earth.**

6. **And I, the Lord God, had created all the children of men, and * not yet a man to till the ground, for in heaven created I them, and there was not yet flesh upon the earth, neither in the water, neither in the air;**

7. **But I, the Lord God, spake, and there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.**

8. **And I, the Lord God, formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul; the first flesh upon the earth, the first man also;**

9. **Nevertheless, all things were created, but spiritually were they created and made, according to my word.**

11 and 26 state that the trees and animals became "also living souls, for I, God, breathed into them the breath of life," having been created spiritually first!

Here we have the direct contradiction, not only of the Bible in the sacred volume, but also of the record which is written in the rocks; for both alike tell us that the earth and sea were full of life for vast ages before man appeared. Nor can any one logically conceive of a stone, for instance, being created a *spiritual* thing, or plants or animals becoming "souls!" Matter and spirit are contradictory ideas, by any dictionary; and "soul" applies only to humanity. Yet this "translation" makes God say these absurd and false things! Needless to say that there is not a trace of any of them in the Hebrew, or in any real translation of it. They are pure inventions.

Between chapter 3:31 and 6:13 Smith *inserts two hundred and seven verses of his own concoction*, including statements about Cain's wife being "one of his brother's daughters," and Cain being "Master Mahan, master of that great secret which was administered"; that "God created man . . . in the image of his own body" (6:9), with garbled New Testament and other ideas about baptism, the new birth, spirits in prison, etc. Not a trace

of any of these verses is in the real Genesis; they are pure concoctions; as the Hebrew or any real translation will prove beyond question.

In Matthew, our "translator" *thrusts in twenty extra verses* in the one passage composing the Sermon on the Mount (chapters 5 to 7 inclusive), besides having about two hundred other words which are wrong; including "straight" twice instead of "strait," evidencing Smith's great ignorance of English as well as of Greek. The most of these changes are also from the Book of Mormon. It is particularly aggravating and *wicked* to thus thrust words into the very teachings of Christ composing this passage, regarded as the very heart of his early message, as if He did not know what should be said! Such changes are almost if not quite blasphemous, making Him speak contrary to his real words!

The gospel of John has changes and additions perhaps more startling than those thus far mentioned. Some of these are as follows:

KING JAMES
John 1:1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2. The same was in the beginning with God.

3. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.

4. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

"INSPIRED TRANSLATION"

1. In the beginning was the **gospel preached through the Son. And the gospel was the word, and the word was with the Son, and the Son was with God, and the Son was of God.**

2. The same was in the beginning with God.

3. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.

4. In him was **the gospel, and the gospel was the life and the life was the light of men.**

5. And the light shineth in **the world, and the world perceiveth it not.**

6. **Then** was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7. The same came **into the world** for a witness, to bear witness of the light, **to bear record of the gospel through the Son, unto all, that** * through him men might believe.

These arbitrary changes deprive Christ of divinity and creative agency.

ΕΝ ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν 1
Θεόν, καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν 2
Θεόν. Πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο 3
οὐδὲ ἐν ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν 4
τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων· καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει, 5
καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτῷ οὐ κατέλαβεν.

We here reproduce the Bible Greek of the first five verses, and challenge any defender of Mormonism, of either kind, to find in it the least justification for a single one of the above changes. They are purely artificial and thrust in by Smith of his own notion; a blasphemous perversion of the holy Word of God!

John 4 has almost as bad additions and changes, which we cannot take time to give, except one; see also verses 1 to 6, "Inspired." Verse 24 in the true Bible gives the best concise statement of the nature of God, and this Smith evidently wished to get out of the way of his new doctrines, hence the following contrast:

KING JAMES
4:24. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

"INSPIRED"
4:26. **For unto such hath God promised his spirit. And they who worship him, must worship * in spirit and in truth.**

The real verse has seventeen words; as simple, correct and true a translation as it is possible to make, giving exactly the sense of the words of Christ in Greek. The verse by Smith has twenty words, besides omitting one; and of these eleven are wrong; and the whole teaching is changed without the remotest shadow of an excuse. This is clearly just another of the plain, vicious perversions of the Bible which characterize the book which we are investigating.

We cannot of course consider all the changes made by this book in our English Bible; to do so would necessitate a book in size equal to more than twice that of the parts of the Bible which are changed. Many of the changes are insignificant, except that even these usually have no relation to any process of real translation, and so are added proof that no translation whatever was done, and that the book is thus just what our title affirms, a fraudulent one. We believe that it is totally impossible for any one who understands translating either Hebrew or Greek to believe otherwise about this "Inspired Translation." And it would seem impossible for any other intelligent person to compare the foregoing parallel passages without coming to the same conclusion. Nor can we see how any one with sense of literary values, logical connection, or the date of origin of New Testament ideas can fail to be driven by a little study to the same conclusion. This book which so loudly claims to be a translation clearly has had none at all; instead of "correcting" the Word of God it has added multitudes of errors in both form and doctrine; instead of lessening difficulties it adds so many that no thoughtful student can believe the work; instead of being from the Holy Spirit of God it is from the unholy spirit of Satan, who alone could possibly have done such deeds. The only possible attitude of the Christian to this book is that of utter condemnation as he may have opportunity. By this tract and otherwise *every believer in the book should be warned* most earnestly.

Was Smith the Author of Smith's "Translation"?

This may seem a strange question, but it is so only to those who do not go deeply into the question. Up to about this point in preparing this tract, we worked on with little attention to any evidence but that of the book itself and other Mormon issues, especially the professed "History of Joseph Smith," in the Millennial Star of 1852, the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants in several editions, (both Utah and Reorganized), etc. Then, while searching for possible older Mormon statements of doctrine for comparison, we came across the following in the most excellent book by Linn, "The Story of the Mormons," page 69:

"The professed object of the Translation was to restore the Scriptures to their original purity The real object, however, was to add to the sacred writings a prediction of Joseph Smith's coming as a prophet, which would increase his authority and supplement the pretensions of the new Bible (Book of Mormon, Ed.). That this was Rigdon's scheme is apparent from the fact that it was announced as soon as he visited Smith, and was carried on under his direction, and the manuscript was all in his handwriting."

A similar statement in Wyl's *Joseph Smith the Prophet*, p. 124, implies that the statement as to the handwriting was made by W. W. Blair, of the committee publishing the "Inspired" book itself. And the Reorganized *Young People's History* makes several references to Rigdon working with Smith in the translation, etc., and on page 127 says:

"In a letter dated July 2, 1833, written to the brethren in Zion, Sidney Rigdon says: 'Having finished the translation of the Bible a few hours since, and needing some recreation, we know of no way we can spend our time more to divine acceptance than endeavoring to build up Zion. . .'"

The larger History speaks still more on this point.

The fact thus seems settled that Smith was not the whole author, at least, of the book to which he has attached his name as such. And those who tell us about the education and literary ability of Rigdon, compared with the opposite facts of Smith, it would seem rightly to believe that the main work of constructing the book, as well as of changing the Book of Mormon, was that of Rigdon; though Smith must be held equally responsible for the evil done. His claim for authorship of this book is another of many instances where we are simply unable to take his word at its face value.

The Real Purpose of the "Inspired."

The writer's study of this book has necessitated strong effort to restrain indignation from overstepping bounds of fairness at the constant displays of sinful tampering with God's sacred message to man. But, though giving days to what seemed sufficiently careful word-by-word comparison of the two versions to be absolutely sure against hasty conclusions, our examinations did not go quite far enough in either Genesis or Isaiah to find the passages answering the above question. In studying those it was harder still to control indignation. In the first of them, beginning at the close of the words "I die," in verse 24 of Genesis 50, Smith-Rigdon falsity adds about 130 lines of pure made-up matter to the Word of God. This is most plainly done to make this new "Bible" foretell Joseph Smith and his father, by their first names, and the Book of Mormon:

"... and his name shall be called Joseph, and it shall be after the name of his father; and he shall be like unto you; for the thing which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand shall bring my people to salvation." "Inspired" Genesis 50:33

This made-up passage is marked by frequent use of "seer," which is rare in the Bible and does not occur at all in its first 300 pages, until II Sam. 24, and "choice seer," which never occurs in the whole Bible, though it is a Book of Mormon expression; and "fruit of the loins," which is made to do duty eleven times in these fourteen verses, while it occurs only once in the 1,000 pages of the whole real Bible, and that one away over in Acts! It is utterly clear that this passage cannot be real Bible! One of the astonishing facts about this manufactured passage is that it also is taken almost bodily FROM THE BOOK OF MORMON, though here it is given as "Inspired" Bible! Smith-Rigdon must thus have made it up for the Book of Mormon first!

The purpose of inserting this passage is clearly to get a prophecy of Smith and the Mormon books into the Bible, to back up their doings later.

The Isaiah passage is of like character and purpose. Between about the 10th verse of the 29th of Isaiah and the thirteenth, and mixed in with the later verses, the "Inspired" thrusts about one hundred and eighty counterfeit verses into this chapter, with similar wicked purposes!

Conclusion.

The writer is a most intense believer in the Bible as the very Word of God, in spite of all the arguments of skeptics and counterfeit teachings of men and systems opposed to that holy Book while falsely claiming its support. Perhaps the most important thing to urge for the religious needs of today is this: USE THE BIBLE AT LEAST DAILY; use it rationally, devotionally, as God's very message to you for daily needs, prayerfully that you may see the message, and with such true helps as may be available. Prayer and Bible use thus will keep any soul from being led far astray. See I. Thess. 2:13:

"... when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, THE WORD OF GOD, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." (Capitals ours.)

This declares that the message of the Apostles was the word of God. This message is faithfully recorded in the Greek of the Epistles, as also are the messages of Christ and the other gospel writers. And the thoughts of all these are faithfully carried over (translated) into English for every one, in the current versions of the New Testament, which thus become the WORD OF GOD to us, as also is the Old Testament. The so-called "Inspired Translation" is thus plainly NOT the Word of God, but of evil men, in so far as it differs in thought from the originals and true translations. To put other words in the mouth of God is to make Him a liar, and is one of the wickedest things a man can do. This "Inspired" book, which does so, intentionally and in multitudes of instances, should be indignantly repudiated by every one, and its falsity advertised that others may not be deceived by it.

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UTAH GOSPEL MISSION

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