



STATEMENT DM-708

LOST BOOKS AND LATTER-DAY REVELATION: A Response to Mormon Views of the New Testament Canon

by Luke P. Wilson

Summary

The Mormon church offers four reasons for rejecting the historic Christian position that the 27 New Testament books are the final installment of divine revelation. It claims that some of Jesus' teachings were never recorded because of their sacred nature and have been lost; that soon after the time of the apostles, apostates removed some books or parts of books from the original New Testament writings; that other inspired books were rejected in the canonization process; and finally, that God continues to give new revelation through latter-day prophets. However, the New Testament itself refutes the notion of secret teachings of Jesus, and Mormons are unable to cite any credible evidence of lost or rejected Scripture. The claim of a universal apostasy in the early church defies logic, history, and the Bible, and the claim of "restored truth" from "latter-day prophets" clashes with the unique office and teaching of Jesus' handpicked apostles.

Most differences between the Mormon faith and historic Christianity originate in disagreements over the nature and extent of revelation from God. This includes disagreement on the question of whether the authority of the Bible is unique and final. It is a basic tenet of Christian orthodoxy that the Bible is complete and the canon of Scripture is closed.

By contrast, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon church) believes in an "open canon" — that is, that God is continuing to reveal new truth beyond what is contained in the Bible that is at least equal in authority to the Bible. Indeed, latter-day revelation is said to be of greater importance than the Bible. In the words of Henry D. Moyle, first counselor to former Mormon President David O. McKay: "The greatest of all scripture which we have in the world today is current scripture. What the mouthpiece of God says to his children is scripture."¹

This article examines four arguments the Mormon church uses in rejecting the historic Christian position that the 27 New Testament books, along with the 39 books of the Old Testament, are the final and complete revelation of God: (1) some of Jesus' teachings were *never recorded* and have been lost, (2) sometime after the death of Jesus' apostles, apostate Christians *removed* some books or parts of books from the original New Testament writings, (3) some inspired books were *rejected* in the canonization process, and (4) God continues to give new revelation through *latter-day prophets*.

LOST TEACHINGS OF JESUS

The first Mormon argument against the final authority of the New Testament is the claim that some of Jesus' teachings were intentionally never recorded because of their sacred nature. These teachings are said to have been lost soon after the time of the apostles. According to Hugh Nibley of the Mormon church's Brigham Young University (BYU), Peter, James, and John were an inner circle of the Twelve apostles, to whom Jesus imparted secret revelation. Nibley interprets the story of these three accompanying Jesus to the mount of Transfiguration

CRI, P.O. Box 8500, Charlotte, NC 28271
Phone (704) 887-8200 and Fax (704) 887-8299

(Matt. 17:1-9; see also Mark 9:2-13, Luke 9:28-36, 2 Pet. 1:16-18) as an occasion when they received secret teaching.²

The biblical text simply offers no tangible support for this fanciful speculation, but instead implicitly undermines it. The three disciples are told only to keep the experience confidential *temporarily*: "As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, *until the Son of man be risen from the dead*" (Matt. 17:9 KJV, emphasis added; the King James Version is used in this article because it is the translation preferred by Mormons). Since this incident is described in four different New Testament books, three of which were penned by nonparticipants (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), Peter, James, and John obviously shared their experience with others in the early Christian community.

Furthermore, Nibley's notion of secret revelation is contradicted by Christ's own declaration to the contrary. When questioned under oath³ before the Sanhedrin about His disciples and doctrine, Jesus testified: "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and *in secret have I said nothing*. Why askest thou me? Ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said" (John 18:20-21, emphasis added; see also Matt. 10:27). Thus, on the basis of Jesus' own unequivocal testimony, the idea of secret teachings must be rejected.

Granted, John wrote, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book" (John 20:30). Yet he continued, "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (v.31). Certainly nothing essential is lacking from the canonical books of the New Testament.

WERE THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITINGS SABOTAGED?

A second Mormon argument against the finality of the New Testament is based on the Book of Mormon teaching (in 1 Nephi 13:26-28) that the Bible was tampered with at some point in the early Christian centuries, and that "many plain and precious parts" were deliberately removed. According to Mormon scholars this passage does not mean that the text of the New Testament has been corrupted or mistranslated, but that entire books or parts of books were removed from the original writings of the apostles.⁴ In the words of Robert J. Matthews, dean of religious education and professor of ancient scripture at BYU: "The Bible has apparently suffered mostly from omissions — it is not particularly erroneous, but many important items are missing, and this in turn leaves some parts unclear."⁵

While 1 Nephi 13 blames the alleged sabotage of the apostolic writings on apostates, the Mormon church has been unable to provide a credible explanation of *when* and *how* this took place. For years the standard Mormon position was the view espoused by apostle James E. Talmage, that it took place in the fourth century.⁶ But by this time the writings of the apostles had been copied and widely circulated for several centuries — as well as cited and translated in numerous other documents, such as early sermons — so we would expect to find vestiges of the excised material among the dozens of surviving New Testament manuscripts from before the fourth century, some dating from as early as the second or even first century. In fact, Mormon scholars are unable to cite any evidence whatever of an early New Testament textual tradition supportive of the distinctive doctrines of the Mormon religion.

Because of the insurmountable problem posed by this absence of textual evidence for missing portions of New Testament books, contemporary Mormon scholars now propose a different theory: at a very early date — Hugh Nibley has suggested a time frame of A.D. 70-80⁷ — the original New Testament documents (autographs) were sabotaged by apostates before copies were made and began to circulate. Robert J. Matthews, representative of those who hold this view, writes: "In order for an alteration to have widespread effect, the text would have to be tampered with early enough that *multiple copies were not already extant*. In other words, the alteration had to be early and by a person or persons having access to *very early records and first-generation copies*" (emphases added).⁸

The implications of this very early dating for the subversion of the New Testament Scriptures are incredible. It requires us to believe that the spiritual condition of the Christian community and its leadership in the very shadow of the apostles was so bankrupt that major extractions could be made from their writings, undetected or unchallenged. At such an early date many, if not most, of the church's leaders would have been men who were converted, trained, and appointed to leadership under the apostles themselves. One can only label such a radical view of events an "instant apostasy."

Is this hypothesis at all plausible? A survey of the biblical and historical evidence shows that there are no grounds for such an instant apostasy. Instead, the overwhelming weight of evidence is against such a view on at least six counts:

(1) Christ promised that His church would never fall into total apostasy: "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). According to Mormon teaching, the Christian church, though established and nurtured by Christ Himself and His hand-picked apostles, fell into total apostasy almost immediately. How interesting, then, that the Mormon church's major instructional manual, *Gospel Principles*, assures us that such a fate can never befall the "restored" latter-day church: "The Lord will never allow the president of the [Mormon] church to teach us false doctrine."⁹ This assertion raises an obvious question: If God is now able to guarantee the perpetual integrity of this "restored church" by protecting its spiritual leaders from error, why did He not do so in the first century?

(2) The New Testament nowhere predicts a total apostasy. An article in the March 1991 issue of the Mormon church's flagship publication, *Ensign*, cited 2 Thessalonians 2:3 as a biblical prediction of such an apostasy.¹⁰ The verse reads: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

This verse and its context (1:7-2:12) describe apostasy in terms of *end-time* events, especially the coming of the Antichrist, and there is no indication that it will be *universal*. While Paul states that "the mystery of iniquity doth already work" (2:7), he clearly does not support the Mormon view of a *total* apostasy 1,900 years ago, at the *beginning* of the Christian era. He goes on to say that "he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way" (2:7), or, as a modern English version puts it, "the one who now holds it [the mystery of iniquity] back will continue to do so until he is taken out of the way" (New International Version). The old English meaning of "let" has the idea of holding back. In other words, the early church enjoyed a restraint on false teaching.

Mormon apostle James E. Talmage cited five additional New Testament passages as predictions of universal apostasy.¹¹ Upon examination one finds that none of the passages predict a *universal* apostasy that extinguishes the gospel and the church of Jesus Christ (requiring a complete restoration at a later date).

- Matthew 24:4-5,10-13 says that "*many*" will be deceived and that "the love of *many* shall wax cold." Many, but not *all*. It is clear that the text (which again focuses on end times) does not have in view a total apostasy, for verse 13 concludes, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."
- Acts 20:30 records the Apostle Paul's warning to the elders of the Ephesian church that grievous wolves will "draw away disciples after them." But nothing in the text supports the view that the faith of *all* the saints at Ephesus (let alone all saints everywhere) will be subverted. In fact, in Revelation 2:2 we find that the Ephesian saints heeded the warning of Paul, for Jesus commends them for not bearing "them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars."
- 1 Timothy 4:1-3 predicts that "in the latter times *some* shall depart from the faith," but not all.
- 2 Peter 2:1-3 predicts that "*many*," but not all, will follow the pernicious ways of false prophets to come. Indeed, the context immediately following is inconsistent with the conclusion that universal apostasy may result. Verses 4-9 cite the Old Testament example of Lot's deliverance from the city of Sodom before its divine destruction to make the point that even in the worst times of spiritual degeneration there are those who are kept true to God, and whom He preserves: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment..." (v.9). This passage constitutes a powerful argument for God's providential protection of His people from universal apostasy.
- Revelation 13:4, 6-9 describes the persecution of Christians by Antichrist. We are told that it will be given unto him to "make war with the saints, and to overcome them" (v. 7). Again, a simple reading of the passage in context shows that it is describing events up to the end of the age, just before the return of Christ. Like 2 Thessalonians 2:3, it does not support the Mormon view of a

CRI, P.O. Box 8500, Charlotte, NC 28271
Phone (704) 887-8200 and Fax (704) 887-8299

great apostasy at the *beginning* of the Christian era. But even if one interprets this passage as applying to the early church, these verses clearly do not describe the *falling away* ("apostasy") of Christians *from* the truth, but the *martyrdom* of Christians *for* the truth (at the hands of Antichrist): "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them" (v. 7). This passage is not describing *apostates*, but *heroes of the faith*.

The passages that deal with apostasy do so with great seriousness. In no case, however, do they support the Mormon doctrine of a *universal* apostasy that extinguished the true gospel and the church of Jesus Christ from the earth, necessitating their later restoration.

(3) Christ promised His apostles that their converts' faith would endure: "I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go forth and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should *remain*" (John 15:16, emphasis added). The theory of a universal apostasy in the generation immediately after the apostles is clearly inconsistent with Jesus' promise here.

(4) Christ commended faithful churches at the twilight of the apostolic era. The last New Testament book, Revelation, generally thought to have been written about A.D. 95, records Christ's personal commendations of the churches at Smyrna (2:8-11) and Philadelphia (3:7-13) for standing fast against immorality and false doctrine. Jesus tells the congregation at Philadelphia: "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and *has kept my word, and has not denied my name....* Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation" (Revelation 3:8,10, emphasis added).

(5) In 2 Timothy 2:2 Paul gives specific apostolic instructions for preserving pure doctrine: "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." If universal apostasy immediately followed the apostles, either these inspired instructions were inadequate, or the apostles themselves failed to follow them.

(6) The witness of the early church contravenes the notion of an early apostasy. A continuous line of historical evidence from as early as A.D. 95-100 shows that the Christian community considered the writings of Jesus' apostles the supreme doctrinal standard. By the last half of the second century there was already universal agreement among the far-flung Christian congregations regarding the inspired nature of 20 of the 27 New Testament books.¹² Support for the remaining seven books (Hebrews, James, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, Revelation) was widespread, contested only by some. By the end of the fourth century recognition of these books also was virtually universal.

The apostolic writings were treated as a precious treasure and carefully handed down to successive generations. Writing about A.D. 180, Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, cited the collective memory of the Christian community as the basis for confidence that the apostles' teaching had been accurately preserved: "True knowledge is [that which consists in] the doctrine of the apostles, and the ancient constitution of the church throughout all the world, and the distinctive manifestation of the body of Christ according to the succession of bishops, by which they have handed down that church which exists in every place, and has come even unto us, being guarded and preserved, *without any forging of Scriptures*, by a very complete system of doctrine, and neither receiving addition nor [suffering] curtailment [in the truths which she believes]..." (emphasis added).¹³ Irenaeus's authoritative testimony directly contradicts the charge of 1 Nephi 13 that parts of the original New Testament writings were deliberately removed by apostates.

The Mormon church's charge of a universal apostasy immediately after the time of the apostles requires us to believe that despite all the divine promises and safeguards, and with the ink barely dry on the New Testament Scriptures, God allowed the entire ministry of Christ and His apostles to be undermined by apostates, plunging humanity into spiritual darkness for 1800 years. Clearly, there is something wrong with this picture.

The lack of any biblical and historical evidence for such an apostasy poses a serious dilemma for the Mormon church. If apostolic Christianity was not destroyed by such an alleged apostasy, there is no basis for Joseph Smith's claim to have restored original Christianity. Mormon apostle James E. Talmage acknowledged, "If the alleged

apostasy of the primitive church was not a reality, The Church of Latter-day Saints is not the divine institution its name proclaims."¹⁴

REJECTED AND LOST SCRIPTURES

A third Mormon argument against the finality of the New Testament is that the early church rejected some books of inspired Scripture, while others were lost. Before considering specific examples of books thought by Mormon scholars to have been wrongly passed over, it will be helpful to survey what is known about the historical process by which the New Testament canon was established.

There are two relevant questions that call for answers. (1) On what basis were some books accepted and others rejected? (2) Who made the decisions to accept and reject these books? The answers to these questions will dramatically affect our understanding of the term "canon." Is it an *authoritative list* of books, or a list of *authoritative books*? In other words, does the authority reside in a religious body that controlled the selection process, or is it inherent in the books themselves?

Most of the Latter-day Saints with whom I have discussed this subject seem to understand the canon in the former sense, as an authoritative list of books. The Third Council of Carthage in A.D. 397 is often cited as the religious body that controlled the selection process. The description of the occasion supplied by Mormon apostle Orson Pratt is representative of this view: "The Pope of Rome gathered together these contending persons in the form of a council, and they sat in judgment upon various manuscripts professing to be divine. That quarreling and contending Council decided that a certain number of books should be admitted as divine, and should form the true canon of Scripture, and that no other books should be added. We are informed that this Council rejected a vast number of books. Some of these books were considered by part of the Council to be of divine origin."¹⁵

Pratt's characterization of the nature and significance of this council's actions as they relate to the canon of the New Testament is inaccurate and misleading on at least two points. First, the Third Council of Carthage was not an ecumenical council convened by the bishop of Rome, but a provincial council presided over by Aurelius, bishop of Carthage. It therefore made no claim to speak for or to the entire Christian church. While it issued the first formal pronouncement regarding the limits of the New Testament canon, it was merely affirming what had already been largely settled by A.D. 175-200 and widely acknowledged and discussed. In the words of the late F. F. Bruce, the men at this council "did not impose any innovation on the churches; they simply endorsed what had become the general consensus of the churches of the west and the greater part of the east."¹⁶

Second, the evidence does not support Pratt's stereotype of the canonization process as one of hierarchical fiat. Its basis was not an appeal to the authority of a pope or council of bishops, but to certain objective, historical qualities possessed by the books themselves. Three criteria in particular seem to have guided the early Christians in judging whether a book was God-breathed Scripture:

(1) Apostolic origin — a book needed to have its origin in the small band of apostles appointed by Christ.¹⁷ The apostles were a unique group. Most of them were eyewitnesses to Christ's earthly ministry and resurrection, and Paul was called directly by Christ. Their testimony and teaching is the foundation on which the Christian church is built (Eph. 2:20). Apostolic authority was understood to include several books penned by close associates of the apostles, written under their influence and during their lifetimes.

(2) Continuous usage by the church — a book needed an unbroken record from ancient times of use in public reading among Christian congregations. This guaranteed its historical link to the apostles. It was also practical evidence of its edifying value in the lives of countless believers. Thus, for example, the historian Eusebius (ca. A.D. 263-339) says in defense of the scriptural status of the Epistles of James and Jude that, although they are not mentioned as often by the earliest Christian writers, "Nevertheless we know that these also, with the rest, have been read publicly in very many churches."¹⁸

(3) Harmony with the Old Testament and apostolic teaching — a book needed to be consistent with God's revelation contained in the canonical Old Testament recognized by Christ,¹⁹ as well as with the known teaching of the apostles. Since God cannot lie or contradict Himself, what He reveals will not conflict with previous revelation (Deut. 13:1-3; Gal. 1:6-9).

CRI, P.O. Box 8500, Charlotte, NC 28271
Phone (704) 887-8200 and Fax (704) 887-8299

Considering the widespread, decentralized nature of the early Christian congregations, and the fact that the various New Testament writings were in most cases originally delivered to a single local congregation or individual, it is surprising to discover how quickly they were copied and circulated, and their status as Scripture recognized. A statement in the Second Epistle of Peter implies that already in the apostolic age the epistles of Paul were being collected and accorded status on par with the Old Testament Scriptures: "...even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him has written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unstable and unlearned wrest, as they do also the other scriptures" (2 Pet. 3:15-16).

As early as A.D. 100 the four Gospels and the major epistles of Paul were widely recognized as Scripture.²⁰ The consensus regarding the New Testament canon continued to grow rapidly during the second century, so that by A.D. 175-200, 20 of the 27 New Testament books (the four Gospels, Acts, the 13 epistles of Paul, 1 Peter and 1 John) were recognized throughout the widespread Christian congregations as inspired Scripture. Bruce M. Metzger of Princeton Seminary concludes in his standard work on the New Testament canon: "What is really remarkable is that, though the fringes of the New Testament canon remained unsettled for centuries, a high degree of unanimity concerning the greater part of the New Testament was attained within the first two centuries among the very diverse and scattered congregations not only throughout the Mediterranean world but also over an area extending from Britain to Mesopotamia."²¹

Representatives of the Mormon church have cited as examples of lost books the epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans (see Col. 4:16) and a third epistle of Paul to the Corinthians (see 1 Cor. 5:9).²² They have also pointed to various rejected books, which they claim were wrongly excluded from the New Testament canon. These include four popular works by early Christians written after the time of the apostles: the epistle of Clement, the epistle of Barnabas, the Shepherd of Hermas, and the apocalypse of Peter.²³

Concerning the two "lost" letters of Paul, we can only conclude that God chose not to preserve them. As for the rejected books, space does not permit an individual evaluation of these writings here.²⁴ In general it may be said that the rejected books failed to meet the basic criteria of verified apostolic origin and were not in full harmony with known apostolic teaching.

Yet one wonders why even a Mormon should take the suggestions of his church seriously, since the First Presidency of the Mormon church has not chosen to incorporate any of these rejected books into its edition of the King James Version Bible. It would surely have done so if any of them were known or came to be known —through the First Presidency's claimed gift of prophet, seer, and revelator — to be of sacred revelation.

DID REVELATION CEASE WITH JESUS' APOSTLES?

As was noted at the beginning of this article, it is a cardinal tenet of Mormonism that the canon of Scripture is not closed and that God is still revealing new truth through latter-day prophets. This is expressed very forcefully in 2 Nephi 29:6,9-10: "Thou fool that shall say: A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible...because I have spoken one word ye need not suppose that I cannot speak another; for my work is not yet finished; neither shall it be until the end of man... Wherefore, because that ye have a Bible ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written."

Why does historic Christianity reject such a view? There are two basic reasons. First, because the New Testament portrays the office of apostle as limited to the first generation of Christians, and makes no provision for the succession of others to this one-time office.²⁵ For the most part, the apostles were eyewitnesses of Jesus' earthly ministry and resurrection (Acts 1:21,22; 1 Cor. 15:5-8), and their writings are the church's foundation and final authority (Eph. 2:20).

The early Christians recognized the unique authority of the first-century apostles. This is illustrated by a passage in one of the letters of Clement, bishop of Rome, in the late first century (who may be the Clement mentioned by Paul in Philippians 4:3). He describes the apostles appointing bishops and deacons, but not other apostles:

The apostles have preached the Gospel to us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ [has done so] from God. Christ therefore was sent forth by God, and the apostles by Christ....they [the apostles]

appointed the first-fruits [of their labors], having first proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons.²⁶

In accord with this are the humble words of Ignatius, bishop of Antioch (A.D. 30-107): "I do not, as Peter and Paul, issue commands unto you. They were apostles; while I am, even until now, a servant."²⁷

Perhaps the most striking illustration of this point is the rationale given in the Muratorian Canon, ca. A.D. 200,²⁸ for rejecting a popular Christian work, *The Shepherd of Hermas*:

But Hermas composed *The Shepherd* quite recently in our times in the city of Rome, while his brother Pius, the bishop, occupied the seat of the city of Rome. And therefore, it should indeed be read, but it cannot be published for the people in the church [i.e., be used for Scripture reading in congregational worship], neither among the Prophets [i.e., Old Testament books], since their number is complete, nor among the Apostles [i.e., the New Testament books] *for it is after their time.* (emphasis added)²⁹

The second reason the Christian church does not look for latter-day revelation is that the Bible presents Christ's incarnation, atoning death, and victorious resurrection as the once-for-all culmination of God's plan of salvation foretold and foreshadowed in the Old Testament (Heb. 1:1-2; 9:26-28; 10:10; Jude 3). Thus, how could additional revelation add anything essential to the Christian message?

Surely, at the very least, latter-day revelation would have to be in complete accord with apostolic doctrine. As Paul declares in Galatians 1:8, "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." It is precisely those doctrines unique to Mormonism, such as the plurality of Gods, eternal progression, and secret temple ordinances, which lack a biblical basis and in fact contradict biblical teaching. And the Mormon gospel of salvation by works stands condemned as another gospel from that of the inspired Scriptures.

Hebrews 2:3 asks a sobering question which highlights the foundation of the Christian message on the testimony of Christ and the apostles, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first *began* to be spoken by the Lord, and was *confirmed* unto us by them that heard him" (emphases added). There is no biblical basis for expecting further revelation. The church's task is rather to preach and teach and defend the faith once-for-all delivered unto the saints (Jude 3), until Christ returns.

Luke P. Wilson, a graduate of Calvin Theological Seminary, is the executive director of Gospel Truths Ministries and the Institute for Religious Research in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

NOTES

¹As quoted by Elder A. Theodore Tuttle, *Official Report of the One Hundred Forty-Third Annual General Conference of the Church of Latter-day Saints*, April 6-8, 1973 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Press, 1973), 12.

²Hugh Nibley, *Since Cumorah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co. and Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1988), 88. Nibley affirms: "When Jesus instructed Peter, James, and John to tell no man of what they had seen on the Mount of Transfiguration, he was withholding sacred things from the uninitiated...."

³This detail supplied in Matthew 26:63.

⁴George E. Reynolds and Janne E. Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1955, 1976), 1:127.

⁵Robert J. Matthews, *A Bible! A Bible!* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1990), 13.

⁶*The Philosophical Basis of "Mormonism"* (1915. Reprint, Peoria, AZ: Eborn Books, 1994), 23-25.

⁷Nibley, 27.

⁸Ibid. See also "Establishing the Truth of the Bible," in *First Nephi: The Doctrinal Foundation* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1988), 206; see also in the same anthology, Stephen E. Robinson, "Early Christianity and 1 Nephi 13-14," 188.

⁹*Gospel Principles* (Salt Lake City: Corporation of the President of the Church of Latter-day Saints, 1988), 46.

¹⁰Roger R. Keller, "Do I Know My Neighbor?" *Ensign*, 26,27.

¹¹James E. Talmage, *The Great Apostasy Considered in the Light of Scriptural and Secular History* (Salt Lake City:

Deseret, 1968 reprint), 27-31.

¹²R. Laird Harris, *Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1957, 1969), 202, and R. M. Grant, "The New Testament Canon," in R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 1:285.

¹³Against Heresies, IV, 33.8, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987 reprint), 1:508.

¹⁴Talmage, iii.

¹⁵*Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols., 7:26.

¹⁶F. F. Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988), 97.

¹⁷Adolph Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 7 vols., 3d ed. (New York: Dover, 1960 reprint), 1:158-60.

¹⁸Church History, II, 23, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, 1:128.

¹⁹See Luke 24:44, where Jesus, speaking of the fulfillment of Scripture, recognizes the three divisions of the traditional Jewish canon.

²⁰Harris, 202 and Grant, 1:285.

²¹Bruce M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 254.

²²*Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1979), s.v. "Lost Scripture," 454.

²³Daniel C. Peterson and Stephen D. Ricks, "Comparing LDS Beliefs with First-Century Christianity," *Ensign*, March 1988, 7-11.

²⁴I did give specific reasons for rejecting each of these books in a paper delivered at the October 1992 Chicago Sunstone Symposium. A copy is available on request from the Institute for Religious Research, 1340 Monroe Ave. N.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49505. Or, it may be downloaded from the Internet: shaggy.fusionary.com/mit/lostbook1.html

²⁵It could be argued that modern-day missionaries serve an apostolic function as "sent ones." Be that as it may, such local church planters are clearly not in a class with those first-century apostles who planted the *universal* church and were given unique revelatory authority for that task.

²⁶The First Epistle of Clement, XLII, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 1:16.

²⁷Epistle to the Romans, IV, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 1:75.

²⁸The traditional date is contested by Geoffrey M. Hahneman, *The Muratorian Canon and the Development of the Canon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), who places it in the fourth century. However, a consensus of scholars still date it about A.D. 200 — see J. D. Douglas, ed., *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974, 1978), 684-85, and Everett Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* (New York: Garland, 1990), 628-29.

²⁹The translation of David J. Theron, *Evidences of Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1957, 1980), 113.