

Weekly Prayer at Concerned Christians

We encourage all of our Metro-Phoenix Area friends to join us in prayer for our LDS neighbors, every Monday, 7:00-8:00 PM, at our Mesa office, 525 East Broadway Road (two blocks east of Mesa Drive, southwest corner of Broadway Road and Pioneer). Hosted by Duane Strohmeyer of Concerned Christians.

Ex-Mormon Support Groups

In Arizona, there are five Concerned Christians support groups: Mesa in the East Valley, Glendale/Peoria in the West Valley, Prescott Valley in North-Central Arizona, Taylor in Northeastern Arizona, and Tucson in Southern Arizona. For times and directions to the location nearest you, call the Mesa office at 480-833-2537.

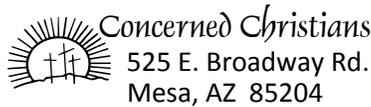
Please Note: The Mesa meeting starts at 7:00 PM on Thursday evenings.

Concerned Christians of the White Mountains

will be meeting every fourth Friday of the month at 6:00pm at Calvary Baptist Church in Showlow. For directions to Calvary Baptist Church you can call 928-537-7555 or go to their website at www.calvaryshowlow.org and go to directions. Meetings will consist of a one hour class on the difference between Mormonism and Biblical Christianity, then an hour of open discussion.



Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all.



www.concernedchristians.org

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Amazing Quotes

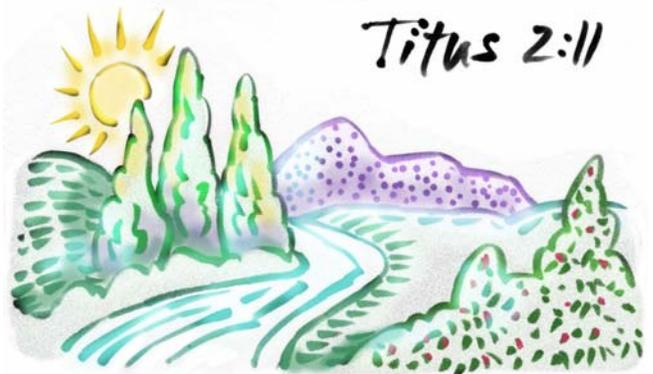
From LDS Church Leaders

"...we must remember the Fall was an essential part of Heavenly Father's divine plan. Without it no mortal children would have been born to Adam and Eve, and there would have been no human family to experience opposition and growth, moral agency, and the joy of resurrection, redemption, and eternal life."

From the article *The Atonement of Jesus Christ* written by Elder Jeffrey Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles; *Ensign*, March 2008; pg 35

For the grace
of God
has appeared,
bringing
salvation
to all.

Titus 2:11



An Old Testament Picture of Christ in the Tabernacle, Part 2 by Cheri Billingsley

The tabernacle (the prototype of the temple) was God’s dwelling place among men. Yet, man could not come to God whenever and however he wanted. He could only come in the manner described by God. There can be no communion or worship until sin is out of the way as an issue between God and man. As we saw in the December/January newsletter, the articles of furniture in the outer court dealt with solving the problem of sin. Having stopped at the brazen altar with a sacrifice and having been cleansed at the laver, the Israelite in his representative, the priest, could now pass from the outer court into the place of worship, the Holy Place. Yet before proceeding further, it would be helpful to consider the foundation, walls and coverings of the Tabernacle proper.

The Foundation: The ransom paid for our lives

The foundation consisted of one hundred blocks of pure silver (Exodus 26:19-25; 38:27). But this was not just any silver. This was the silver collected by Moses when God commanded him to take a census of the Israelite men twenty years and older. “When you take a census of the Israelites to count them, each one must pay the LORD a ransom for his life at the time he is counted ... Each one who crosses over to those already counted is to give a half shekel ... the rich are not to give more...and the poor are not to give less when you make the offering to the LORD to atone for your lives” (Exodus 30:11-15). This numbering by God implied ownership. It signified that the Israelites were God’s people and were redeemed from the world. While the blood shed at the brazen altar pointed to the *character* of redemption, the silver was a reminder of the *cost* of redemption.

In some ways, the redemption of sinners is like that of the Israelite men. As God estimated every Israelite man at the same value, so He estimates every sinner at the same value and requires the same price to be paid for every one. In the New Testament, Peter reminds us “For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed ... but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect” (1 Peter 1:18-19).

As the tabernacle and all that it represented (worship of God in the Holy Place and communion with God in the Holy of Holies) rested on a shining foundation made of the ransom silver, so the redemption we have rests on the finished work of

Christ. In light of what Paul said, we see that this silver foundation is a beautiful symbol of the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ which was shed on Calvary’s cross and upon which our whole worship of and fellowship with God rests. Without the shedding of Christ’s blood, we could neither truly worship nor commune with God.

The Framework: Christ’s Humanity and Deity

On top of the foundation of silver rested frames or boards made of acacia wood. These were overlaid with gold and were held together by crossbars, also made of acacia wood and overlaid in gold (Exodus 26:15-29). Acacia is a wood that grows in the desert and is considered incorruptible. That is, it doesn’t rot. This is a symbol of Jesus humanity. He was tempted in every way yet without sin, he lived an incorruptible or perfect life. But he is also everlasting deity as represented by the gold. Thus, these materials symbolize the Lord Jesus Christ as He is today, for we cannot truly enjoy worship or fellowship with God without the finished work of Christ.

The Roof: Surrounded by Christ’s Righteousness

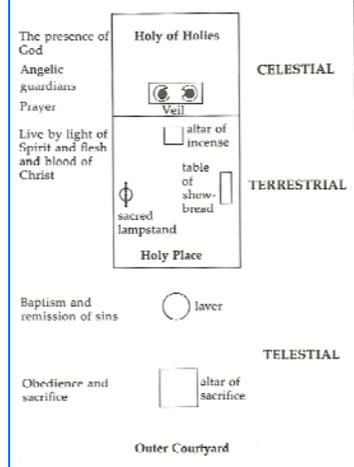
We now come to the coverings or roof of the tabernacle, the shelter under which the priest was to minister in the sanctuary. Innermost are ten “curtains of finely twisted linen and blue, purple and scarlet yarn” (Exodus 26:1-6) which are held together as a unit with gold clasps. These are not just random colors, rather they represent various aspects of Christ: his perfect righteousness (white), as the King (purple), a sacrificing Servant (scarlet) and as perfect God (blue). Just as the priest ministering in the tabernacle was surrounded by these symbols, so when a redeemed sinner comes to worship or fellowship with God, he stands surrounded not by his own righteousness but by the righteousness that belongs by right to Christ and is given to him by the grace of God (Ephesians 1:7-8).

Goat hair: The Scapegoat and our atonement

Over the linen curtain were eleven curtains of goats hair held together as a unit by bronze clasps. In the Bible, the goat was not only a clean animal fit for sacrifice on the brazen altar, it was also the animal that was to be used annually as the sin offering on the Day of Atonement. “Then he is to take the two goats and present them before the LORD ... he is to cast lots for the two goats – one

Does this LDS Explanation Show Christ?

According to the LDS *Old Testament Genesis – 2 Samuel Student Manual* “the layout and construction of the tabernacle itself typified, or symbolized, man’s progress toward perfection so that he could enter into the presence of God” (pg 154) [emphasis added].



(Continued on back cover)

Another Look At DNA vs. The Book of Mormon

by Marsha Book

In 2004, I was thrilled to find out about DNA research that had been done on thousands of ancient skeletal remains of American Indians which had proven that the Indians did not descend from ancient Israel. This contradicts what is put forth as fact in *the Book of Mormon* by Joseph Smith. The logical implication of this would be that this DNA research proves the *Book of Mormon* to be historically untrue. I'm left scratching my head saying, "Why hasn't this been a fatal blow to the LDS Church and to Mormonism? After all, DNA is evidence that is upheld in courts of law, right?"

To recap briefly what is in Mormon doctrine regarding the origin of the American Indians, here is how the story goes:

In 589 BC, an Israelite family was instructed by God to construct a ship, to flee their land and to travel (8,500 miles) across the ocean. The ship landed in Central America and the new arrivals populated the entire land. A dispute broke out between two divisions of the people resulting in two separate and colossal wars that were 200 years apart. One faction was favored by God and described as being white and delightful. They were completely destroyed by the darker skinned, mischievous and less favored group (descendants being the American Indians). This whole story was allegedly recorded by ancient prophets on gold plates that were hidden in the ground in New York. Then in 1823, Joseph Smith claimed to have had a heavenly visitation and was told where to find the plates. He eventually transcribed the plates from an unknown language and the *Book of Mormon* is the result.

The foundation of the LDS church either stands or falls on the validity of the *Book of Mormon* and the credibility of Joseph Smith. While this is indeed an interesting story, it is also genetically impossible, and therefore historically untrue. The late Gordon B. Hinckley when asked to comment about this DNA evidence is on record as saying, in an awkward and stumbling sort of way, "It hasn't happened... That's speculation... No one really knows..." and, "That hasn't been determined conclusively." Ah, but it has been determined conclusively. Hinckley was doing what the LDS church seems to do best when pressed for an explanation for their doctrines which contradict and depart from historic Christianity, which is... *pretending the evidence doesn't exist*. And the next leader to take over Hinckley's role will no doubt take a similar stance, hoping that followers do not have the will or the common sense to think for themselves on the issue.

In actuality, results of the DNA testing done in North, South, and Central America conclude that an overwhelming 99.4% of the remains tested are people descended from northeast Asia – likely,

from Siberia. It would make greater sense that the Siberians would have crossed a 50 mile range of the Bering Straight (between Russia and Alaska) rather than crossing 8,500 miles of treacherous ocean in 589 BC. The artifacts used by the two people groups are similar, the physical appearances are similar. In contrast, the linguistics comparison is in no way similar to the ancient Hebrew language. Archeological evidence is also non-existent -- wouldn't there be *something* discovered in the ground *somewhere* to account for the alleged double wars and a massive population of intelligent people? There has been nothing found to substantiate what is described in the *Book of Mormon* concerning this.

Furthermore, isn't it common knowledge of the general public that the first inhabitants of North and South America indeed came from Asia? In a recent article in the Los Angeles Times (printed, February 17, 2008) released in the East Valley Tribune discussing glacier movements, author Thomas H. Maugh II writes, "Ancestors of the American Indian populations migrated eastward out of Siberia in Russia about 40,000 years ago, according to studies of mitochondrial DNA..." While there is a debate as to *when* this migration happened, there's no question among scholars *that* it happened.

Again I would ask: Why hasn't the DNA research dealt more of a crippling blow to the LDS church? Some Mormon apologists would try to attest that God miraculously changed the DNA in order to test their faith - which is absurd, I might add. And if Mormons manage to get up the courage to ask their leaders about controversy in their doctrine, the answer would probably be, "You need to serve more." Or, "Pray more." I know of one person who when doubting the LDS doctrines was told by the local bishop, "You need to be in a teaching position." (I suppose that was to serve as a distraction from doubting?). In other words, the person in authority would insist that you (a Mormon who questions their doctrine) are the problem. How sad. In my mind, the DNA evidence should be all that is needed to prove the *Book of Mormon* is not of God, and far from being "...the most correct book on earth" as Joseph Smith purported. I suggest it is a figment of a very fertile imagination. All of this would not bother me so much if the LDS church would at least try to retract obvious falsehoods in their doctrines, and fess up to saying they are wrong about some things.

We know that truth will ultimately prevail. I pray that it is sooner rather than later, for the sake of the lost sheep.

Much of the information for this article was obtained from the DVD: *DNA vs. the Book of Mormon*, by Living Hope Ministries, Brigham City, UT



What's In A Word? You'd Be Amazed

by Bob Betts

In light of Marsha Book's article on DNA in this issue, we do find a positive step, perhaps, in a recent *Book of Mormon* change.

The *Salt Lake Tribune* headline read, "Single word change in the Book of Mormon speaks volumes" (November 8, 2007).

As if controversy hasn't already been a hallmark of its 178-year history, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has announced a one-word change in the introduction to the next edition of the *Book of Mormon*. The late LDS apostle, Bruce R. McConkie, was the author of the 1981 edition's introduction, which included this statement: "After thousands of years, all were destroyed except the Lamanites, and they are the principal ancestors of the American Indians." The new statement will read, "After thousands of years, all were destroyed except the Lamanites, and they are among the ancestors of the American Indians." What is the significance of this word change?

A Concession of Sorts?

Simon Southerton, a former LDS Bishop, author of *Losing a Lost Tribe: Native Americans, DNA and the Mormon Church*, and a senior research scientist with the

Commonwealth Scientific Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), suggested that with this word change, the LDS church is "conceding that mainstream scientific theories about the colonization of the Americas have significant elements of truth in them. DNA has revealed very clearly how closely related the American Indians are to their Siberian ancestors."

Even the official LDS web site, attempts to fend off *Book of Mormon* criticism resulting from the DNA issue, stating, "Recent attacks on the veracity of the Book of Mormon based on DNA evidence are ill considered. Nothing in the *Book of Mormon* precludes migration into the Americas by peoples of Asiatic origin. The scientific issues relating to DNA, however, are numerous and complex."

One has to wonder how this word change will simplify the matter. I'm so glad I worship the God of truth, and of the unchanging and everlasting gospel. "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3).



If I have a
faith
that can move
mountains,
but I have not
love
I am nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:2



Thank-you to all who came to help renovate and paint one of our buildings. We look forward to placing it into service for our Lord.

THE CROSS



Dear Concerned Christians,

Thank you so much. Your literature is very helpful in knowing how to respond to Mormons.

(Sun City West, AZ)

Dear Friends,

If available, I would appreciate it if you will send me three or four copies of the little blue booklet entitled "The Difference Between Mormonism and Christianity" [The booklet being referred to is *No Comparison*]. We recently heard Liz Bennett from Grace Bible Church, where we also attend in the winter months, speak to a group. At that time we learned of the "little blue book" and found it to be very helpful. I will want to send you the cost of the booklet, or a contribution when I hear from you. Thank you!

(Sun City West, AZ)

Dear Concerned Christians,

I am so thankful that God has brought your ministry into my life. I just received my first issue of *The CROSS* in the mail, and it is the perfect information at the perfect time. Isn't it amazing how God works! I have never been in the Mormon Church, but have been burdened for them for years... Two weeks ago I went to visit my father-in-laws' church with him, and the pastor mentioned LDS beliefs in his sermon. Afterward I went to talk to him about something he had said, and he loaned me a book he thought I would like to read. It was *Out of Mormonism* by Judy Robertson. I literally read it from cover to cover in two hours. The book led me to your website where I signed up for *The CROSS* newsletter.

All week, I have been putting together a summary of the deity of Christ in Christian doctrine and the non-deity of Christ in LDS doctrine for a group of ladies I met at a Bible Study. I was working on the Elohim/Jehovah, one or two persons, when *The CROSS* newsletter arrived with the article on LDS Apostle Denounces the Trinity Doctrine ... Isn't it amazing how God puts exactly what you need in hour hands at the time you need it!

(Puyallup, WA)

Dear Cheri,

My wife and I stopped by your office and had a long talk with Bob Betts. He gave us a DVD about Jesus Christ/Joseph Smith. Very well done, tells it just like it is – you are doing a fantastic job. Thank-you.

(Mesa, AZ)

Dear Mrs. Robertson,

I want to thank God for your ministry and your book. Last spring my cousin was dating a Mormon and was very serious with him. He began to push her to get baptized, and while my aunt and uncle knew what Mormonism truly is, they did not tell my cousin to break off her relationship with him. I found out from my grandmother that my cousin was considering being baptized a Mormon, I knew then I had to act. I began to pray fervently for God to rescue my cousin. Soon after my step-father's aunt, with whom I never have contact, had a conversation with my mother. In that conversation my mom disclosed what I was doing for my cousin. Soon after my mom received a book from her, your book! I tore through the book, writing in my own commentary and scriptures as I planned to give it to my cousin. After months of prayer I finally had a chance to connect with my aunt and uncle and talk to them about what was at stake during a family vacation.

I am eternally grateful and happy to say that soon after my cousin received the book she began to see Mormonism for what it truly was. The day that she was to be baptized in the Mormon temple she decided to say "No!" to her boyfriend. I thank God for your ministry and that he heard my prayer. Continue to fight the good fight, you are making a difference! One day I will thank you in person, whether on earth or in heaven. Once again thank you!

(received via e-mail)

Dear Concerned Christians,

Thanks for the tracts and newsletter. I don't have internet or really know how to use a computer so can't visit your website but will tell my daughter in Las Vegas. One of the ladies in their home-school network just left Mormonism after becoming a Christian through their including her. When she encountered real Christians she wanted

what they have! She may think she's the only ex-Mormon Christian in Vegas.

As for me, I was born and raised Mormon, the descendent of pioneers and polygamists. I finally heard the true gospel at age 22 after being immersed in the "counter culture" of the 70's. I had my name removed from the church rolls officially 22 years later – a mistake to wait for my parents to die. As a new Christian I had shared with parents, brother and sisters the difference between the two gospels. When I officially left the church the siblings got this tract from me [Basic Teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints], which none have acknowledged. Thanks again, have a blessed day.

(Phoenix, AZ)

Dear Concerned Christians,

Thank you for the work you do. May God continue to bless your ministry.

(Fayetteville, AR)

The following is a series of two letters received via e-mail:

March 2007 -- I was just watching the Flagstaff news and they did a story about the videos you were distributing door to door. I was wondering if there was any way that I could get one of those. I was raised Mormon and in recent years have been questioning the religion. I would really like to see what your video is about, but I can't afford to buy it. I would really appreciate a copy.

March 2008 -- Cheri, It has been nearly a year since you sent me the video and it changed my life. I am getting ready to announce to my family that I am no longer Mormon and have sent in my resignation from the Mormon church. However, I would really like to talk with somebody who is a former member of the church. I am currently in Tucson so if you know anybody there that you could put me in touch with, that would be fantastic. Thanks.



Concerned Christians of Mesa

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Mesa, AZ 85211-0018

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lot for the LORD and the other for the scapegoat. Aaron shall bring the goat whose lot falls to the LORD and sacrifice it for a sin offering. But the goat chosen by lot as the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD to be used for making atonement by sending it into the desert as a scapegoat" (Leviticus 16:7-10). What a tremendous picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. When our sins were laid upon him, there was a transferring of our guilt to him and He paid the price of death by shedding His blood. He took our sins in order that we might become the recipients of His righteousness. The second goat, after having the sins of the people transferred upon it by confession and the laying on of hands of the priest was sent into the desert, never to return. In the same way, Christ as our sin-bearer carried our sins and removed them from us as far as the east is from the west.

The Ram's Skin: Christ's consecration as our substitute

Over the goats hair was the third layer, a covering of rams' skin dyed red (Exodus 26:14). The ram was the offering used when the priests were consecrated or set apart for their work of service in the tabernacle (Exodus 29:1, 15-21). In the same way, Jesus was consecrated or set apart for His work, the work of becoming a Substitute for sinners. As noted above, the scarlet color also speaks of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and the atonement which He made for sins. The righteousness that we receive in Christ is only because of his blood that covers us.

The Badger's Skin: Christ's humanity

The fourth layer or outermost covering of the tabernacle was made of the skins of badgers or sea cows (Exodus 26:14). This covering was exposed to the sun, rain, and the elements. It was the only covering visible to the outsider and had nothing appealing about it. It gave little hint of the beauty beneath the drab exterior. This is a perfect picture of the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ which is all that is visible to the outsider. This is all that the world, the unbeliever can see of Christ, there is no attractiveness about Him. Only those who have stopped at the brazen altar of sacrifice (accepted the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross as the only payment for their sin) and have been cleansed at the laver (washed on the inside after coming to know of God's salvation through Christ's sacrifice) can pass from the outer court into the Holy Place where they can behold the breath-taking, indescribable beauty inside, the beauty of the deity of Christ.

(If you desire to study the tabernacle in more depth, some excellent resources include: *The Tabernacle, Gods Portrait of Christ* by J. Vernon McGee; *The Tabernacle* by M.R. DeHann; *The Tabernacle, Its Priests and Its Services* by William Brown, and *Exodus, Volume 3*, a 6-hour audiotope or CD set by Malcolm Smith, available through Unconditional Love International at www.malcolmsmith.org)

