

Chapter 6

Joseph Smith, False Prophet

Greater than Jesus?

The authors quote *History of the Church* 6:408-09 the effect of Joseph Smith having done a greater job than Jesus in keeping his Church together (pp. 80). However, what the authors do not tell their readers is that this is in fulfilment of what none other than Christ Himself promised. Jesus Christ, in John 14:12, promised that His followers would do greater works than He did (emphasis added):

Verily, verily, I say unto you, **He that believeth on me**, the works that that I do shall he do also; and **greater works than these shall he do**; because I go unto my Father.

Of course, informing readers of this would put stunt their opportunities to portray Joseph Smith as an egotist.

Mediator of the restored covenant

The authors work under the delusion (p. 81) claim that “The blood of Joseph was deemed sufficient to achieve that for which the blood of Christ was alone as once thought sufficient. Joseph, then, becomes the mediator of the restored covenant.” It is true that Hebrews 9:16-17 refers to a general principle, it is meant in its context to refer to Christ’s consummation of a new testament or covenant through the atonement. In His role, Jesus is absolutely peerless. But since several of the apostles who survived Joseph Smith have applied the role of testator to him, the question is whether there is a subordinate sense in which that passage also pertains to him? A few Church leaders have so taught. Speaking of the Prophet, Elder Erastus Snow affirmed that “the Lord suffered his enemies to destroy him in the flesh, to take away his life, and he was made an offering - what shall I say? An offering for sin. Not in the sense in which the Savior was offered, but he was made a martyr for the truth and his blood was shed to attest the testimony that he bore to the world.”¹

President Joseph F. Smith summarises the zenith of the Prophet’s mortal mission in the following statement:

Joseph Smith was true to the covenants that he made with the Lord, true to his

¹ *Journal of Discourses* 25:33 as cited by Daniel B. McKinlay, “The martyrdom: Joseph and Hyrum Smith as testators,” in *Revelation, reason, and faith: Essays in honor of Truman G. Madsen*, ed. Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 2002), 477-98, here p. 486

mission, and the Lord enabled him to accomplish his work, even to the sealing of his testimony with his shed blood. His testimony is now, and has been, in force among the children of men as verily as the blood of Jesus Christ is in force and a binding testimony upon all the world, and it has been from the day it was shed until now, and will continue until the winding up scene.”²

Joseph Smith as Judge

The authors quote a number of proclamations from Brigham Young in the Journal of Discourses to the effect that “No man or woman in this dispensation will ever enter into the celestial kingdom of God without the consent of Joseph Smith...He reigns there as supreme a being in his sphere, capacity and calling, as God does in Heaven” (p. 81). However, is this really significant? While shocking to many, this is consistent with the New Testament, where Jesus promises the 12 Apostles that they will play some part in the judgement of the 12 tribes of Israel in the Matthew 19:28. Joseph Smith, as the first and fore-most prophet of the final dispensation prior to the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ will, as with the Apostles, play a similar part in the final judgement, albeit, a subservient role to that of Christ’s, as with the Apostles for those who have lived in “this dispensation.”

Those who Joseph Smith will play a part in the judgement of will be all those from ~1830 onwards ("this dispensation"). Joseph Smith was and is a Prophet of God, and how one accepts or rejects a Prophet of the Lord is a great reflection of how one accepts the truthfulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. One could draw a parallel to the New Testament. Could one honestly accept Jesus while rejecting Peter? Matthew? Luke? Paul? John? Can one claim that they truly follow God if they reject, say, Old Testament prophets such as Moses? David? Solomon? Daniel? Malachi? The answer is a NO. And the question of one's acceptance or rejection of the Prophet Joseph Smith is on par with such.

A similar proclamation on role Joseph Smith will play in the final judgement comes from the Journal of Discourses, the speaker being recorded in this instance being Parley P Pratt on the 7th of September, 1857 (emphasis added) -

I have testified and do still testify of the truth of the Book of Mormon—that it is an inspired record, the history of a branch of the house of Israel that live in America; that it does contain the fulness of the Gospel as revealed to them by a crucified and risen Redeemer; and that wherever it goes and its light is permitted to shine, the Spirit of the Lord will bear testimony of its truth to every honest heart in all the world. Wherever that book is candidly perused, the Spirit will bear record of its truth: and I bear this testimony this day, that Joseph Smith was and is a Prophet, Seer, and Revelator—an Apostle holding the keys of this last

² Joseph F. Smith, Conference Report, October 1917, 3, as cited by *ibid*.

dispensation and of the kingdom of God, under Peter, James, and John. And not only that he was a Prophet and Apostle of Jesus Christ, and lived and died one, but that he now lives in the spirit world, and holds those same keys to usward and to this whole generation. Also that he will hold those keys to all eternity; and no power in heaven or on the earth will ever take them from him; for he will continue holding those keys through all eternity, and will stand—yes, again in the flesh upon this earth, as the head of the Latter-day Saints **under Jesus Christ. and under Peter, James, and John.** He will hold the keys to judge the generation to whom he was sent, and will judge my brethren that preside over me; and will judge me, together with the Apostles ordained by the word of the Lord through him and under his administration.³

This passage, as with similar ones, such as the Young quotation, shows that the role Smith will play is a subservient one, as shown by the fact he will be "under" Jesus Christ and the 3 main Apostles, Peter, James, and John (who appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to restore the Melchizedek Priesthood in 1829). Yes, he will be a judge in the last day, but not the Head Judge, and will only judge those who have been around since about the time of the Restoration of the Church of Christ in 1830.

Joseph Smith and Prophecy

Deuteronomy 18:20-22

On page 82, the authors cite this pericope and apply the standard Evangelical exegesis to the effect that one false prophecy makes a false prophet. However, this is nothing short of eisegesis, notwithstanding the popularity of such an interpretation.

At first glance, this passage appears to present a straightforward test. Failed predictions mark false prophets. As parsimonious as this interpretation may be, it does not account for the many predictions from canonical (and thus true) prophets that were not realised, something I will discuss below.

Interpreters have taken different approaches to this difficulty. Many critical scholars treat Deuteronomy 18:22 as a uniquely Deuteronomistic perspective that is contradicted by other biblical traditions. Evangelicals usually argue that Moses' test should be taken as the general rule to which there are few exceptions.

An alternative outlook would be to assume that Moses and his audience realised that unqualified predictions had implied conditions. If this dynamic was well-known, then he did not have to repeat it explicitly when he offered his criterion in Deuteronomy 18:22. In this view, Moses' test instructed Israel to expect a prediction from a true prophet to come about, *unless* significant intervening contingencies interrupted.

³ *Journal of Discourses* 5:195-96

This understanding of the Mosaic criterion may explain why so many passages highlight the historical contingencies that interrupted many fulfillments. Old Testament writers account for the Mosaic test of false prophets by pointing out why the predictions of true prophets sometimes did not come true. For example, the writer of Jonah explains how the king of Nineveh ordered fasting and mourning by “every person (*h`dm*) and by every best (*whbhmh*), herd (*hbqr*), and flock (*whs`n*)” (Jonah 3:7). The Chronicler used one of his most poignant theological terms (*kn`*) when he said that Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah “humbled themselves” (2 Chronicles 12:6). The writer of Kings described Josiah’s ritual tearing of his robe (2 Kings 22:11). The specificity of these passages suggests that so long as Israelites could point to significant intervening contingencies, they had not trouble accepting interrupted predictions as originating with Yahweh.⁴

Furthermore, another the pericope establishes two other criteria for a false prophecy:

- It must be uttered in the name of the Lord. This means that an off-the-wall comment by a prophet cannot be taken as a prophecy, pretended or otherwise he declares he is delivering the word of the Lord.
- The prophecy must fail. But no timeframe is established for the fulfilment of a prophecy.

False Prophecy and biblical prophets

Interpreting Deuteronomy 18:20-22 in the manner anti-Mormon critics wish to interpret the pericope proves disastrous for their views on the infallibility of the biblical texts.

In 2 Samuel 7:5-17, we read that the prophet Nathan unequivocally prophesied to David that through his son, Solomon, the Davidic empire would be established “forever,” that the children of Israel would dwell in the promised land “and move no more,” and that the “children of wickedness” would not longer afflict them. These things are quite clearly stated. No conditions are attached to these promises, none whatsoever, yet this prophecy clearly did not prove successful if interpreted literally.

Another example of a problematic biblical prophecy is in Judges 13:5, where it is recounted that an angel promised Samson’s mother that Samson would “begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.” No matter how liberal or expansive one wants to be with the facts of Israelite history (as recorded in the Bible or elsewhere), there is not way it can reasonably be concluded that Samson fulfilled this prophecy.

Not only did Samson fail to even “begin” to free Israel from the Philistines, but (1) there were times when he consorted with Philistine women, (2) he married a Philistine, (3) he

⁴ Based on Dr. Richard L. Pratt, “Historical Contingencies and biblical predictions: An inaugural address presented to the faculty of reformed theological seminary,” 23 November, 1993, pp. 13-14

himself never even led any Israelite troops against the Philistines, and (4) the Philistines eventually humiliated him.

Moreover, and more importantly, Israel actually lost ground to the Philistines during Samson's tenure. Judges 13-16 illustrates Philistine encroachment into Hebrew territory. The Samson narrative documents the eastward expansion of the Philistines by mentioning the Philistine presence in Timnah and Lehi, both in the strategic valley of Sorek. This Philistine expansion worsened the land shortage that eventually forced the Danites to migrate northward.

Of course, the non-fulfilment of Judges 13:5 can be attributed to Samson's failure to live according to his Nazarite calling. In addition to his sexual liaisons, he married a Philistine, ate unclean food, drank wine, and allowed his hair to be cut. Therefore, it could be said that the angel's prophecy was nullified by Samson's behaviour. However, the angel placed absolutely no conditions on his promise that Samson would begin to deliver Israel from the Philistines. He simply declared that Samson would do so.

Other prophecies contained in the Bible that prove to be problematic include (though not limited to):

- The Passover feast being said to be an eternal ordinance (Exodus 12:14) and circumcision to be an eternal covenant (Genesis 17:13).
- Jacob's prophecy that Judah would not be without a ruler until Shiloh (the Messiah) had come (Genesis 49:10).
- Isaiah's prophecy of Hezekiah's death (Isaiah 38:1-5).
- Jeremiah's prophecy concerning Zedekiah (Jeremiah 34:4-5; 52:10-11).
- Jesus prophesied that "the end would come" after the gospel was "preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations" (Matthew 24:14). Paul later stated that, in that day, the gospel...was preached to every creature which is under heaven (Colossians 1:23). Many other prophecies of Christ seemed to confirm the nearness of fulfilment of that day, but have not yet been fulfilled (Matthew 10:23; 16:28; 24:34; 26:64; Mark 13:30; Luke 21:24-27, 32).⁵

D&C 87: The Civil War Prophet

The authors make a number of errant assumptions with regards to their analysis of the Civil War prophecy as canonised in section 87 of the Doctrine and Covenants -

- They labour under the assumption that the "rebellion" in the first verse refers to a rebellion in South Carolina 1832 that did not lead to a Civil War.
- That the reference to war being "poured upon all nations" refers to the Civil War.

⁵ This list is based on Michael W. Hickenbotham, *Answering challenging Mormon Questions* (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon Publishers and Distributors, 1994), 42

However, these assumptions and claims are false.

That Joseph Smith did not expect the move, on the behalf of South Carolina, for nullification in 1832 to lead to the Civil War can be seen in D&C 130:12-13, from September 6, 1842:

I prophesy, in the name of the Lord God, that the commencement of the difficulties will cause much bloodshed previous to the Coming of the Son of Man will be in South Carolina. It may probably arise through the slave question. This is a voice declared to me, while I was praying earnestly on the subject, December 25th, 1832.

The following items are among the specific predictions of the revelation:⁶

1. Wars will shortly come to pass, beginning with the rebellion of South Carolina:

This, then, was a prophecy of a series of wars which would begin with the rebellion of South Carolina. That state withdrew its representation from congress, passed an ordinance of secession, and then on April 12, 1861, fired on the Union troops stationed in Fort Sumpter. It was this bombardment that started the actual war between the states.

2. The Southern States will be divided against the Northern States:

Eleven of the Southern States seceded from the Union, and thus the Southern States were truly divided against the Northern States.

3. The Southern States will call on the other nations for help, even the nation of Great Britain:

In May, 1861, the South sent representatives abroad to England, France, Holland, and Belgium, so seek for political recognition and military and economic assistance in the war.

4. Great Britain will also call upon nations for help in order to defend itself against other nations.

5. Then war shall be poured out upon all nations:

For many years, England relied on the strength of her navy for protection rather than on alliances with France and other nations for protection rather than on alliance with foreign powers. It was not until Germany began to rival her sea power that England sought

⁶ The following is based on Duane S. Crowther, *The Prophecies of Joseph Smith: over 400 prophecies by and about Joseph Smith, and their fulfillment* (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon Publishers and Distributors, 1983), 230-32

alliances with France and other nations for protection against the Axis powers. These alliances brought on World War I, and in that conflict and in World War II it can be seen that war was poured out upon all nations.

Joseph also said that “after many days” slaves would rise up against their masters. I don’t think this refers to the Civil War, but to later events, perhaps events such as uprisings of repressed people in many Communist nations and other authoritarian states. Past and future uprisings of some groups in the United States may also be meant. During the Civil War itself, however, there was relatively few instances of slaves rising up against their masters. The prophecy, however, says “after many days,” probably referring to many days after the prophesied war had begun, not during the Civil War.

Finally, in the several Indian uprisings *after* (not during as the authors so desperately wish [p. 83]) the close of the Civil War, many see the fulfilment of the part of the prophecy that the “remnants who are left of the land [Amerindians] will marshal themselves, and shall become exceeding angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation.

The Second Coming

The authors claim (p. 84) that Joseph Smith declaration that “even fifty-six years should wind up the scene” is a false prophecy is false. The use of the word “should” clearly reveals it to be conditional, not a prophecy. To argue otherwise is non sequitur.

However, this, and their quote from *The changing world of Mormonism* with Smith declaring that “The Son of Man will not come in the heavens till I am eight-five years old forty years hence or about 1890” is paralleled in D&C 130:14-17 and page 286 of *The teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. I will then examine such to reveal the learned fraud critics produce on the Prophet’s declarations on this matter.

Let’s start by quoting Joseph Smith from *The teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. The quote is from a conference talk on April 6. 1843:

The question has been asked, can a person not belonging to the Church being a member before the high council for trial? I answer, No. If I had not actually got into this work and been called of God, I would back out. But I cannot back out: I have no doubt of the truth. Were I doing to prophesy, I would say that the end [of the world] would not come in 1844, 5, or 6, or in forty years. There are those of the rising generation who shall not taste death till Christ comes.

I was once praying upon this subject, and a voice said unto me, “My son, if thou livest until thou art eighty-five years of age, thou shalt see the face of the Son of Man.” I was left to draw my own conclusions concerning this; and I took the liberty to conclude that if I did live to that time, He would make His appearance. But I do not say whether He will make His appearance or I shall go where He is. I prophesy in the name of the Lord God, and let it be written - the Son of Man will

not come in the clouds of heaven till I am eighty-five years old. Then read the 14th chapter of Revelation, 6th and 7th verses - “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgement is come.” And Hosea, 6th chapter. After two days, etc., - 2,520 years; which brings it to 1890. The coming of the Son of Man never will be - never can be till the judgement spoken of for this hour are poured out: which judgement are commenced. Paul says “Ye are the children of the light, and not of the darkness, that day should overtake you as a thief in the night.” it is not the design of the Almighty to come upon the earth and crush it and grind it to powder, but he will reveal it to His servants the prophets.

Judah must return, Jerusalem must be rebuilt, and the temple, and water come out from under the temple, and the waters of the Dead Sea be healed. It will take some time to rebuild the walls of the city and the temple, etc.; and all this must be done before the Son of Man will make His appearance. There will be wars and rumours of wars, signs in the heavens above and on the earth, beneath, the sun turned into darkness, and the moon to blood, earthquakes in divers places, the seas heaving beyond their bounds; then will appear one grand sign of the Son of Man in heaven. But what will the world do? They will say it was a planet, a comet, etc. But the Son of Man, which will be as the light of the morning cometh out of the east.

We can leave out the first four sentences since they have nothing to do with this discussion. Let's examine the rest of the passage in the reference:

Were I going to prophesy, I would say the end [of the world] would not come in 1844, 5, or 6, or in forty years

Notice how Joseph Smith starts out, “Were I going to prophesy...” This is a clear indication that this part of the quote was not a prophecy, but was his own opinion and not something the Lord had revealed to him. Even so, the fact is, the end of the world did not come in 1844, 5, or 6, or even in 1883, just as the prophet declared.

The next sentence says:

There are those of the rising generation who shall not taste death till Christ comes.

If one wants to argue that this statement made in 1843 is a false prophesy, then we have to ask, what is to be made of the following statements by Christ?

Verily I say unto you, there be some standing there, *which shall not taste of death,*

till they see the Son of Man coming in this kingdom (Matthew 16:28)

And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, *which shall not taste of death*, till they have seen the Kingdom of God come with power (Mark 9:1)

But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, *which shall not taste of death* till they see the kingdom of God (Luke 9:27)

Notice that there is a specific term being used by both the Saviour and the Prophet Joseph Smith. That term is “taste death.” Most people interpret this term to mean the physical death of the mortal body. But this cannot be the meaning if the words of the Saviour are true. A more correct interpretation would be that this term refers to our relationship with the Lord. In other words, for those who die “in the Lord” death is not bitter, but sweet.

And it shall come to pass that those that die in me shall not state of death, for it shall be sweet unto them; and they that die not unto me, for their death is bitter (D&C 42:46-47).

It would be a double standard to accept the Saviour’s statement of not tasting death until He returns in power and glory (which was around 2,000 years ago) while at the same time rejecting Joseph Smith’s statement using the same words (which was over 160 years ago).

Another statement within the text quotes the prophet as stating:

I was once praying earnestly upon the subject, and a voice said unto me, “My son, if thou livest until thou art eighty-five

Many critics of the Church use this sentence as their evidence that this is a false prophecy. They argue that Joseph Smith said the Second Coming would come when he was 85 years old. That would be in late 1890.

However, concerning the above statement, the Prophet Joseph Smith went on to say:

I was left to drawn my own conclusions concerning this; and I took the liberty to conclude that if I did live to that time. He would make His appearance. But I do not say whether He will His appearance or I shall go where He is.

So the Prophet clearly was speaking about his own opinion when the Second Coming would be and his conclusion was that he didn’t know.

Next we come to an actual declaration of prophesy by Joseph Smith.

I prophesy in the name of the Lord God, and let it be written - the Son of Man will not come in the clouds of heaven till I am eighty-five years old.

The prophecy was *not* that the Second Coming would be by 1890, but that the second coming would not occur at least *until* Joseph Smith was eighty-five years old. But, since Joseph had finished saying that *he did not know* whether Christ would come, or he would go where Christ was, this prophecy can only mean that the Second Coming of Christ would not come *before* the end of 1890. The prophecy was conditional upon Joseph Smith living to be eighty-five. Since this condition was not met, Joseph's statements do not brand him a false prophet. If Joseph Smith himself stated that he did not know what to make of the Lord's revelation concerning 1890, then how can anyone interpret it differently?

Another important event in Church history occurred in 1890. On October 6, 1890, at General Conference, the Manifesto ending Plural Marriage was accepted by the membership of the Church. Perhaps the Lord would have made this known to Joseph Smith when he was 85 years but chose not to tell him. Certainly the Lord, who knows all, knew the hearts of men and knew what the future brought to the Church. Perhaps, and if, Joseph Smith had lived till he was 85 years, he would have received this revelation, and not Wilford Woodruff, thus the words of the Saviour to Joseph Smith, "My Son, *if* thou livest until thou art eighty-five years of age, thou shalt see the face of the Son of Man" could have been a reference to a future revelation.

It might be interesting to note that in the October Conference of 1890 there were many speakers who spoke of the Second Coming of the Lord in light of expectations based upon what Joseph Smith had said. None of them said it was going to happen.

One might enquire about the likelihood that the Lord would "trick" Joseph Smith thus, making him think that he would see the Lord in 1890 when, in fact, the Lord knew Joseph would die in 1844. The question is mooted by a similar situation in the Bible. Isaiah came to King Ahaz in the name of the Lord and told him that Ephraim (head of the northern kingdom of Israel) would be broken "within threescore and five years" (Isaiah 7:8). Ahaz reigned in Judah from 734 to 728 BCE. Sixty-five years later would be 669 – 663 BCE. In actual fact, however, Israel was taken captive in 722 BCE, just six years after Ahaz's death, when his son Hezekiah was king of Judah.

Furthermore, in Doctrine and Covenants 49:1-7, we read that Christ's second coming would remain unknown until He comes.

D&C 84 and the Temple in Missouri

The revelation can be read as either as a commandment or a prophecy. If it is a prophecy, we have the same problem with the use of the term "this generation" found in Jesus' prophecy in Matthew 23:34, which also refers to events which have not been accomplished. We know that there are people from Jesus' time (and Joseph Smith's) who are still alive, including John the Revelator and the three Nephite disciples, not to mention Enoch, Melchizedek, Elijah and others.

If the revelation is a commandment rather than a prophecy (as I believe), then it is a commandment that was simply not followed because the Latter-day Saints were forcibly driven from the Independence region. That it was a commandment and not a “failed prophecy” is indicated by the Lord’s words to Joseph Smith in D&C 124:49-51:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, that when I give a commandment to any of the sons of men to do a work unto my name, and those sons of men go with all their might and with all they have to perform that work, and cease not their diligence, and their enemies come upon them and hinder them from performing that work, behold, it behooveth me to require that work no more at the hands of those sons of men, but to accept of their offerings. And the iniquity and transgression of my holy laws and commandments I will visit upon the heads of those who hindered my work, unto the third and fourth generation, so long as they repent not, and hate me, saith the Lord God. Therefore, for this cause have I accepted the offerings of those whom I commanded to build up a city and a house unto my name, in Jackson County, Missouri, and were hindered by their enemies, saith the Lord your God.

That the Lord can change his mind when men act contrary to his will is reflected in Jeremiah 18:7-10:

At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build up and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them.

Interestingly, the prophecy in D&C 84:5 was fulfilled at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple in March, 1836, according to the journals of many then present.

The fact that some early Mormons believed that the fulfilment of the promise in section 84 of the Doctrine and Covenants would soon come to pass is consistent with the scriptural record. The Israelites had to wait 40 years before being allowed to enter the Promised Land of Canaan.

Joseph Smith and the Word of Wisdom

On pages 85 to 87, Mike and Ann Thomas demonstrate how little they know about Mormon history by bringing into the question of the Word of Wisdom and Joseph Smith’s use of alcohol and establishment of a bar in Nauvoo. They labour under the false *a priori* assumption that the Word of Wisdom, canonised as section 89 of the Doctrine and Covenants, has always been understood by members of the Church as a commandment. However, this is incorrect. The Word of Wisdom did not become a

commandment until the 1880s when, after several decades of fairly lax interpretation in frontier America, this health code was given renewed emphasis during this time, with the Word of Wisdom being the subject of an increasing educational campaign, and observance of the Word of Wisdom at least in its most obvious prohibitions became a prerequisite for appointment to leadership positions, service as missionaries, and entrance into the temples.⁷

That the Word of Wisdom was not a commandment contemporary with the Prophet Joseph Smith can be seen from the prologue to what is now section 89 of the Doctrine and Covenants (emphasis added):

A word of wisdom for the benefit of the council of high priests, assembled in Kirtland, and church; and also, the saints in Zion: to be sent greeting: **not by commandment, or constraint:** but by revelation and the word of wisdom: showing forth the order and will of God in the temporal salvation of all saints in the last days. Given for a principle with promise, adapted to the capacity of the weak, and the weakest of all saints, who are or can be called saints.⁸

Furthermore, such can also clearly be seen from Joseph Smith's attitude towards alcohol, for instance. Even after 1833, when the Word of Wisdom was originally revealed to the Prophet, he still consumed, in moderation, and in a rather public manner, wine.⁹

Joseph Smith and Polygamy

These charges [of fornication] prompted the revelation known as Doctrine and Covenants section 101. The fourth verse emphatically stated that one man should have one wife. But Joseph was already involved with other women...(p. 88)

There is no real problem, the authors' ignorance of the facts notwithstanding. This was neither a lie of Joseph Smith trying to cover up his polygamous marriages nor anyone else for that matter, for two reasons:

- The Church was not practicing plural marriage and it was not made a practicing tenet of the faith of the Latter-day Saints until 1852.
- In addition, this section made its way into the text while Joseph Smith was away transacting business for the Church. Historical sources suggest that Oliver Cowdery did this unauthorized but because the Conference convened at that time ratified it for inclusion in the Doctrine and Covenants, it was retained until such time as another

⁷ Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon experience: A history of the Latter-day Saints* 2nd edition (Chicago, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 299

⁸ The prologue, that is now the first three verses of the Word of Wisdom were part of the introduction, not the revelation, in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants to section LXXX.

⁹ For examples of this, see Scott H. Faulring, *An American Prophet's record: the diaries and journals of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, 1989), 117, 122, 130, 153-54, 294, 365, 372, 375.

Conference actually changed Church policy and practice and officially recognized what later became section 132 in 1852, publishing the latter in place of the old section, which was replaced in the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. It was NOT a revelation, contra the authors.