

Mormons worry aloud about misunderstandings and misrepresentations of their religion.

According to Mormons, a visit to their church's website, mormon.org, is a good way to learn the truth about their faith. In this paper, we'll look there.

We'll look also at Mormon scriptures. Mormons say those texts, as interpreted by their living prophets, define the church's official doctrines.

Let's start with the Creation.

CREATION & CREATIVE MORMON DOCTRINES

At the church's [website](http://mormon.org), selecting "people," we see what everyday Mormons say about themselves and their religion. When we search there for "Creator," we find words about being a happy, creative person, or enjoying God's creation; little reference to scripture; and no verifiable official doctrine. Looking elsewhere:

In its published scriptures—

Sure enough, the Mormon church teaches that God is the Creator—the Creator of day and night, water and dry land, flora and fauna, and so on, and finally man and woman, exactly as recorded in the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible. In fact, it publishes the KJV text unchanged, and commends it to its members.

But that's only the beginning of the church's Creation story. The KJV account, it turns out, wasn't quite enough. From its earliest days, in the 1830s and 1840s, the church was revising and adding to its story, now contained along with the Bible *in the church's scripture canon*.

In their scriptures, Mormons have three major Creation accounts:

The Bible itself.

The Book of Moses, eight chapters revising the Bible, "translated" by inspired guesswork of the Latter-day Prophet Joseph Smith.

The Book of Abraham, five chapters and three drawings, said to be the work of Abraham on papyrus, identified and "translated" by Joseph Smith.

Common sense alone would suggest that the Mormon church's scripture canon cannot be Christian scripture. In addition, the contradictory Creation accounts illustrate the aberration of the "restoration" of true Christianity claimed by the church.

A Quick Look

In its published Bible, although the King James text is unchanged, the Mormon church adds footnotes referring readers to its alternative Creation accounts in

The Book of Moses and The Book of Abraham—22 times for the first 14 verses on page 1.

In its revised chapters of Genesis, *The Book of Moses*, Chapters 2, 3, and 4 are rough parallels of Chapters 1, 2, and 3 of the KJV, written in first person English ("And I, God, said..." instead of "And God said..."). However, radical Mormon doctrines also are introduced, including this in Moses 3: "And it [a tree] also became a living soul." Beasts and birds "were also living souls; for I, God, breathed into them the breath of life...."

In its Book of Abraham the church imagines the patriarch conversing with God to learn about creation, planets, and stars; the pre-earth life of all mankind; and plans for redemption.

—Chapter 3 describes conversations among God and others about making an earth where His offspring could become mortal and have their obedience tested. His sons, Jesus and Lucifer, offered conflicting proposals, and God chose Jesus to become the Savior.

—Chapters 4 and 5 repeatedly refer to "the Gods"—not "God"—as the Creators, or organizers, of all things. Two important insights into the religion: •In 4:27, "So the Gods went down to organize man in their own image, in the image of the Gods to form they him, male and female to form they them." •In 5:7, "And the Gods formed man from the dust of the ground, and took his spirit (that is, the man's spirit*), and put it into him; and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."

*Adam had grown to spirit adulthood in heaven before Creation and needed a body to progress further.

The Book of Mormon is the Mormon's primary proselyting tool. The objective is for people to read and pray about the book, then receive a subjective conviction that it—and, therefore, the church and its prophets—are true. Knowing or understanding the doctrines of the religion is secondary.

Rarely will a Mormon suggest the reading of The Book of Moses, much less The Book of Abraham, to gain a conviction that Mormonism is true Christianity.

What can we do about it when conversing with Mormons? Suggestions: Testify, and—

- Never pray about the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. Its content is a subtle attack on eternal biblical truths.
- Propose that Mormons read and explain the heretical content of their Book of Abraham.