

Prophets in Mormonism – Part 23

by Marvin W. Cowan

Diaries are not usually considered to be scripture, but *Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 130 was copied from Joseph Smith's diary dated April 2, 1843. All the introduction to *Doctrine and Covenants* 130 says is, "Items of instruction by Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Ramus, Illinois, April 2, 1843 HC 5:323-335." But *Doctrine and Covenants* 130 doesn't cite the source of those instructions. HC 5:323-335 is *History of the Church* volume 5, pp. 323-325 and is given as a reference but neither it nor the *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* pages 321-324 give the source of Smith's instructions in *Doctrine and Covenants* 130.

However, **parts of Smith's diary on April 2, 1843** were copied with a few words changed to make *Doctrine and Covenants* 130. To see that, compare *Doctrine and Covenants* 130 with photo copies of Smith's original 1843 diary, pages 37 through 44 or in the published volume entitled *An American Prophet's Record, The Diaries and Journals of Joseph Smith*, pages 339 to 341, published by Signature Books in Salt Lake City, Utah in 1987.

Since Smith's diary on April 2, 1843 has *other content before, after and between some verses in Doctrine and Covenants 130*, **how** and **why** was the content *selected to become LDS scripture*? Did God *intermittently* inspire what Smith wrote in his diary that day? Smith didn't say that **any part** of his diary was LDS scripture.

Doctrine and Covenants 130:1 says, "When the Savior shall appear we shall see him as he is. We shall see that *he is a man like ourselves*." 1 John 3:2 also says "We shall see Him as He is," but it does *not* say He is just like us (*now*). It says "**We shall be** like *Him*," but that is *future, when He returns*. So, He is NOT a man like us *now*, as Smith said.

Doctrine and Covenants 130:2 says, "That same sociality which exists among us here will exist among us there" only with eternal glory. But nothing in the Bible indicates that the same social structures we have here continue in eternity. On the contrary, the picture given in Revelation 21 and 22 sounds very different from our present society.

Smith wrote in *Doctrine and Covenants* 130:3, "John 14:23—The appearing of the Father and Son, in that verse, is a *personal appearance*; and **the idea that the Father and the Son dwell in a man's heart is an old sectarian notion, and is false**." If that is a *false sectarian notion*, why does the *Book of Mormon* say in Alma 34:36: "...**the Lord hath said He dwelleth not in unholy temples, but in the hearts of the righteous doth He dwell**." This is just one of many places where Smith contradicted what he said somewhere else.

The *context* of John 14:23 shows Jesus was *not* talking about a *personal (physical) appearance*. In John 14:19-20, Jesus said, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but you see me: because I live, you shall live also. At that day you shall know that I am in my Father, and *you in me, and I in you*." In John 14:22 a disciple asked Jesus, "How is it that you will *manifest yourself unto us and not unto the world*?" In response Jesus said in verse 23, "If a man loves me,

he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and *make our abode with him.*” So, the context does not imply a personal, physical coming of the Father and Son as Smith claimed.

Furthermore, John 15:5 says, “I am the vine, you are the branches: He that abides in me, and **I in him**, the same brings forth much fruit.” The Bible also says that **God or Christ is in believers** in Romans 8:9-10; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:27; 1 John 4:4 etc., so that is *not* an old “sectarian notion” but a biblical doctrine.

Doctrine and Covenants 130:4 is not in Smith’s diary, but is a transition to a new subject. *Doctrine and Covenants* 130:5-6 says that angels who minister to this earth are those who **belong to it**. *Doctrine and Covenants* 132:16-17 also supports that idea when it says **angels were mortals who lived on earth but did not get married for eternity (in an LDS temple) and therefore can’t become gods but will become angels who are single and who will serve others forever.**

Doctrine and Covenants 130:7-9 says angels and God live on a great “Urim and Thummim” which is “like a sea of glass and fire.” “This earth, in its sanctified and immortal state, will be made like unto a crystal and will be a Urim and Thummim to the inhabitants who dwell thereon.” On page 323 the *Doctrine & Covenants Student Manual* says the 2nd LDS Prophet, Brigham Young explained what that means when he said, “When it (the earth) becomes celestialized, it will be like the sun, and be prepared for the habitation of the (LDS) saints (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p. 163).” It also quoted Brigham saying, “This earth, when it becomes purified and sanctified, or celestialized, will become like a sea of glass; and a person, by looking into it, can know things past, present, and to come; though none but celestialized (LDS) beings can enjoy this privilege (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p. 87).”

But, Brigham also said, “Who can tell us of *the inhabitants of this little planet that shines of an evening, called the moon?*...When you inquire about the inhabitants of that sphere you will find that the most learned are as ignorant in regard to them as the most ignorant of their fellows. So it is with regard to *the inhabitants of the sun*. Do you think it is inhabited? I rather think it is. Do you think there is any life there? *No question about it; it was not made in vain*” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, p. 271).

In the same volume Brigham said, “I have never yet preached a sermon and sent it out to the children of men, that they may not call scripture” (p. 95). Does Joseph Smith’s and Brigham Young’s “scripture” sound like biblical scripture? Mormonism wants to be accepted as part of mainstream Christianity, but these LDS teachings are not what Christians believe or teach.

Anyone who wants to read more on this LDS Scripture can do so in the *LDS Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual*. Our next article will conclude our discussion of *Doctrine and Covenants* 130.