

# Prophets in Mormonism – Part 6

by Marvin W. Cowan

On July 12, 1843 Mormonism's founder, Joseph Smith, recorded a revelation about plural marriage that wasn't published in the *Doctrine and Covenants* until 1852. It is now Section 132 in the current *Doctrine and Covenants*. The introduction to it says, "It is evident from the historical records that the doctrines and principles involved in this revelation had been known by the Prophet since 1831." That explanation was given because Joseph Smith had secretly practiced polygamy since around 1831. In fact, out of his 34 known wives he married all but two or three of them *before* this revelation was recorded!

*Doctrine and Covenants* Section 132:1-4 says,

Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as *you have inquired* of my hand to know and understand wherein I, the Lord, *justified* my servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as also Moses, David and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and doctrine of their having *many wives* and concubines—Behold, and lo, I am the Lord thy God, and will *answer* thee as touching this matter. Therefore, prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you; for all those who have this law revealed unto them *must obey the same*. For behold, I reveal unto you a *new and everlasting* covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye *damned*; for no one can *reject* this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory.

In *Doctrine and Covenants* 132:1 "the Lord" was *answering Smith's inquiry* about how Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David and Solomon were "*justified*" in having many wives and concubines. So, Smith was thinking about polygamy. In *Doctrine and Covenants* 132:34-39 "the Lord" told Smith that He gave them their wives, concubines and children and *accounted them for righteousness* and no sin was committed except in the case of David and Uriah's wife.

But, Jacob 2:24 in the *Book of Mormon*, says that David and Solomon's wives were an "*abomination*" to Him! So, did God give David and Solomon wives and concubines and *justify* them even though they were an *abomination*? Or, did Smith's "revelation" come from God?

In verse 4, the Lord told Smith He was revealing a "new and everlasting covenant" regarding polygamy. But could Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and others have practiced it anciently if it was a *new law* in 1843? And why do Mormons now *deny* they practice it if it is an *everlasting law*? Verse 3 says, "All those who have this law revealed to them *must obey the same*" and verse 4 says, "If ye abide not that covenant, then are ye *damned*." It also says, "No one can *reject* this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory" and verse 21 says, "Except ye abide my law ye cannot attain to this glory" (of godhood).

*Doctrine and Covenants* 132 is still LDS scripture, so all Mormons have that law *revealed* to them. But today they claim they do *not* practice polygamy, so are they

*damned* as verse 3 says and are they *excluded* from God's glory as verses 4 and 21 say? Or, doesn't LDS scripture mean what it says? By the way, did Isaac and Moses have more than one wife?

Joseph Smith's first wife, Emma, was angry when she heard about her husband's involvement in polygamy and she refused to accept it. In order to "encourage" her to accept it "God" said in verse 52 "And let my handmaid, Emma Smith, receive *all those (wives) that have been given unto my servant Joseph*"... And in verse 54 He said, "And I command mine handmaid, Emma Smith, to abide and cleave unto my servant Joseph, and to *none* else. But if she will not abide this commandment she shall be *destroyed*, saith the Lord; for I am the Lord thy God, and will destroy her if she abide not in my law."

The irony of this LDS "scripture" is that Joseph lived the law of plural marriage, but eleven months after this "revelation" was recorded he was shot dead at the age of 38 while he was in jail for breaking the law! Emma *rejected* Smith's revelation and refused to ever accept polygamy but *was not destroyed*. She lived 35 years longer than Joseph, *married another man* and died at the age of 75. So, did this "scripture" come from God?

*Doctrine and Covenants* 132:61-63 says,

If any man espouse a virgin, and *desire* to espouse another, and the first give her consent, and if he espouse the second, and they are virgins, and have vowed to no other man, then he is justified; he cannot commit adultery for they are given unto him; for he cannot commit adultery with that that belongeth unto him and to no one else. And if he have ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him, and they are given unto him; therefore is he justified. But if one or either of the ten virgins, after she is espoused, shall be with another man, she has committed adultery, and *shall be destroyed*....

Joseph Smith never received permission from his first wife, Emma, to marry his other wives, but he married them anyway. At least eleven of the wives Joseph married were *already married* to other men at the time Joseph married them, so they *were not virgins*! Therefore, Joseph broke the "law of God" regarding this. Several of Smith's plural wives married other men *after* marrying Joseph, but *they were not destroyed* and all of them lived longer than Smith did!

Joseph also married at least seven girls between the ages of 14 and 17. Warren Jeffs, the current Prophet of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is now being prosecuted for marrying girls of that age to other men. If Jeffs is a criminal, isn't Joseph Smith also a criminal?

The *Doctrine and Covenants* contains Mormonism's latter day revelations, but what good are they if LDS members don't obey them?

More can be read on this subject in the book entitled *In Sacred Loneliness, The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith*, by Todd Compton, published by Signature Books in 2001. We will continue our discussion of Prophets in Mormonism next time.

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