

THE LYING PROPHET

...and the "Mormon" Olympics

by Paul Carden

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When's the last time a lie made you really angry?

I can answer that question without much difficulty – James 1:20 notwithstanding.

It was when I read the January 21, 2002 feature article on Mormonism in *The New Yorker* ("Lives of the Saints" by Lawrence Wright). Early on, Wright describes his personal interview with Mormon church president Gordon B. Hinckley at the cult's headquarters in Salt Lake City, recording this exchange:

In the Mormon scheme, every person is a potential divinity. The adage "As man now is, God once was; as God now is, man may be" expresses the Mormon belief that God was once a human being, with a wife and children. But Hinckley did not seem interested in discussing matters of theology. When I asked him to characterize God's connubial relationship, he replied, "We don't speculate on that a lot. Brigham Young said if you went to Heaven and saw God it would be Adam and Eve. I don't know what he meant by that." Pointing to a grim-faced portrait of the Lion of the Lord, as Young was called, he said, "There he is, right there. I'm not going to worry about what he said about those things."

I asked whether Mormon theology was a form of polytheism.

"I don't have the remotest idea what you mean," he said impatiently.

Let that sink in.

According to any Mormon missionary you'll meet, one of the marks of the "true church" is that its president is a living "prophet, seer, and revelator" – the supreme "mouthpiece of God on earth." As the cult's official *Gospel Principles* manual puts it: "How fortunate are the Latter-day Saints! We know that God communicates to the Church through his prophet....A prophet is a man called by God to be his representative on earth. When a prophet speaks for God, it is as if God were speaking....We are blessed in this insecure world to have a prophet through whom the Lord reveals his will" (pp. 47, 50).

One is left to wonder why a man claiming to possess such responsibilities would feign ignorance or evade such an important question.

Evidently taken aback by Hinckley's response, Wright patiently reminds him of what "polytheism" means:

"More than one god."

"Yes, but that's a very loose term....I wouldn't describe us as polytheistic."

No? In the words of the classic manual *Mormon Doctrine* by the late Bruce R. McConkie (one of the cult's apostles), "there is an infinite number of holy personages, drawn from worlds without number, who have passed on to exaltation and are thus gods." Or, as Orson Pratt (another Mormon apostle) so memorably stated in the *Journal of Discourses*, "If we should take a million of worlds like this and number their particles, we should find that there are more Gods than there are particles of matter in those worlds."

Even after nearly 25 years in this field, I was genuinely outraged that Mormonism's "Prophet" would so casually brush off a direct question about so important a matter – as though it were annoyingly irrelevant, or as though it were not his job (as the ultimate spiritual authority on this planet) to know such things! But worst of all, Hinckley claims to lead the one and only church of Jesus Christ, even while arrogantly thumbing his nose at the Bible and its standard of truth (cf. Isaiah 43:10, Deuteronomy 18:20).

As the Olympics unfold in the coming weeks, and as the Mormon Tabernacle Choir sings for multiplied millions via television under the majestic Wasatch mountains, remember: The Mormon church is a non-Christian, polytheistic cult, led by a deceiver.

And remember to pray – for these Games have worldwide, spiritual implications. This fact, of course, is not lost on the Mormons; as Matthew Engel, a journalist for Britain's *Guardian* newspaper wrote,

These will be the Mormon Games. And as with Barcelona and Sydney, the setting will linger in the collective memory long after we have all forgotten who won the ice dancing. If it all goes well, it will be Utah's triumph. That means a Mormon triumph. And that means next time a well-scrubbed young man with a ... smile comes to your door and asks, very politely, if you might be interested in a chat about religion, it will be just a little bit harder to slam the door in his face.

In fact, some 60,000 Mormon missionaries worldwide are hoping just that.

Our response to Mormonism – and to the countless other cults that plague the church and deceive the seeking – must be global. We must not only take the Good News to the lost, but we must equip the church in developing nations where God's people are the most vulnerable to cultic assault. 🌐



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