

# Captain Morgan and the Masonic Influence in Mormonism

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Captain Morgan and the  
Masonic Influence in Mormonism  
Chapter 13 (pages 151-169) from:

[The Mormon Kingdom Vol. 1](#)

## Section Hyperlinks

The Mormon writer Hyrum L. Andrus claims that Joseph Smith obtained "essential elements" of the Temple Ceremony from the papyri he received from Michael H. Chandler:

*"Evidence indicates that Joseph Smith obtained the **ESSENTIAL COVENANTS, key-words, etc., of the***

*temple ceremony from the writings of Abraham. (See Facsimile No. 2, figures 3 and 8.) . . . . Having obtained **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS** of this ceremony **from the writings of Abraham**, he then organized them into a formal ceremony, . . . ." (God, Man and the Universe, 1968, p. 334)*

Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy, states:

*"All of these ordinances of exaltation are performed in the temples for both the living and the dead. They were given in modern times to the Prophet Joseph Smith by revelation, many things connected with them being translated by the Prophet from the papyrus on which the Book of Abraham was recorded." (Mormon Doctrine, 1966 ed., page 779)*

In [The Case Against Mormonism, Vol. 2](#), we show that the papyri have nothing to do with Abraham or his religion. Now that it is plain that these papyri are pagan documents, Mormons must look elsewhere for the origin of the temple ceremony. We feel that at least part of the temple ceremony came from Freemasonry. In fact, the similarities between the temple ceremony and the ritual of the Masons are rather startling. Before we discuss these, however, we are going to discuss the controversy regarding Masonry which took place in Joseph Smith's time.

## REFLECTED IN BOOK OF MORMON

Alexander Campbell points out that the "question of free masonry" is discussed in the Book of Mormon. Masonry was a very important issue in Joseph Smith's time. Whitney R. Cross states:

"William Morgan became a Mason in Rochester in 1823, but found himself excluded from the Batavia chapter . . . he wrote the *Illustrations of Masonry* and arranged for its publication by the Batavia Advocate press. The secret leaked out however, whereupon the unfortunate author suffered a series of mysterious persecutions. First the authorities held him briefly on a debt claim, so that his lodgings could be searched for the manuscript. On September 8, 1826. parties of strangers, apparently from Buffalo, Lockport, and Canandaigua, began appearing in town. Their attempt at arson on the print shop failed. Then a trumped-up charge demanded Morgan's presence for trial in Canandaigua. While in jail there awaiting his hearing, he was kidnapped on the evening of September 12. His captors drove him in a curtained carriage through Rochester, by the Ridge Road to Lewiston, and thence to the Fort Niagara powder magazine. He may after a time have been released across the Canadian border. More probably he was tied in a weighted cable, rowed to the center of the Niagara River at its junction with Lake Ontario, and dropped overboard. In any case, it cannot be proved that he was ever seen again.

". . . The event implicated Masons all the way from the Finger Lakes to the Niagara Frontier... Thus by 1827 village committees from Rochester westward had begun to organize politically against the accused society. . . . The major issue seemed to be one of morality: Masonry was believed to have committed a crime. Its members had put their fraternal obligations ahead of their duty to state and society, sanctioning both a lawless violation of personal security and a corrupt plot to frustrate the normal constitutional guarantees of justice. . . . Its titles and rituals smacked of monarchy as well as of infidelity. The very secrecy which required such reckless guarding suggested ignoble and dangerous designs. Whence, for instance, came the skulls, reputed to be used for drinking vessels in the ceremony of the Royal Arch degree? Curiosity, fancy, and rumor thus multiplied the apparent threats of Masonry to the peace, order, and spirituality of society.

"Such reactions grew as expert propagandists played upon the fears and wonderment of the multitude. . . . the Antimasonic excitement . . . may well have been the most comprehensive single force to strike the 'infected district' during an entire generation. Charles Finney later estimated that two thousand lodges and forty-five thousand members in the United States suspended fraternal

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activity. Most of the groups in western New York must have done so. (*The Burned-Over District* by Whitney R. Cross. New York, 1965, pp. 114, 115, 117 and 120)

Walter Franklin Prince made this statement concerning the relationship between the Book of Mormon and Masonry:

"Now in at least twenty-one chapters in seven out of the sixteen 'books' of the Book of Mormon are to be found passages, varying from several to sixty-three lines in length, plainly referring to Masonry under the guise of pretended similar organizations in ancient America." (*The American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 28, 1917, page 376)

After studying copies of the *Wayne Sentinel* and the *Palmyra Freeman* (these are newspapers that were printed in Joseph Smith's neighborhood), we have become convinced that the controversy over Masonry is reflected in the *Book of Mormon*. To understand the relationship it is necessary to know how excited the people in New York became after Morgan's disappearance. In the *Wayne Sentinel* for March 23, 1827, we find the following quoted from the *Rochester Daily Advertiser*:

*"The excitement respecting **Morgan**, instead of decreasing, spreads its influence and acquires new vigour daily. Scarcely a paper do we open without having our eye greeted by accounts of meetings, together with preambles and resolutions, some of them of a cast still more decided and proscriptive than any we have yet published. . . .*

*"The **Freemason**, to not only those who took off **Morgan**, but every one who bears the masonic name are proscribed, as unworthy of 'any office in town, county, state, or United States!' and the institution of masonry, . . . is held up as **DANGEROUS** and detrimental to the interests of the country!"*

The controversy over Masonry soon became political. The *Wayne Sentinel* carried the following statement on November 16, 1827:

*"The election in this county (says the Ontario Messenger) has resulted in the choice of the entire **ANTI-MASONIC** ticket."*

On March 7, 1828, the following appeared in the *Wayne Sentinel*:

*"At a convention of Freemasons, opposed to **SECRET SOCIETIES**, held at Le Roy, . . .*

*"Mr. Read then spoke very extensively upon **the obligations of masonry** showing that they we were*

*diametrically opposed to good government, and **SUBVERSIVE** of the principles of justice and good order."*

On November 9, 1827, Eliphalet Murdock claimed that some years before his father was found with his throat cut. He implied that the Masons had murdered him because they felt he had revealed their secrets:

*". . . I believe the **Lodge** was thus induced to suppose that he had revealed those **secrets**, and dealt with him accordingly! Thus,*

*I believe my father fell a victim to masonic vengeance, and that without a cause!" (Wayne Sentinel, Nov. 9, 1827)*

The feeling against Masonry became very strong, and many Masons left the fraternity to actively work against it. The following appeared in the *Wayne Sentinel* on July 18, 1828:

" . . . the **masonic society** has been **SILENTLY GROWING** among us, whose principles and operations are calculated to

*SUBVERT AND DESTROY* the great and important principles of the commonwealth.

" . . .

It requires the **CONCEALMENT OF CRIME** and protects the guilty from punishment.

"It encourages the commission of **CRIME** by affording the guilty facilities of escape.

"It affords opportunities for the corrupt and designing to

form plans against the government and the lives and characters of individuals. . . .

"**An institution**, thus fraught with so many and great **evils**, is **DANGEROUS** to our **GOVERNMENT** and the safety of our citizens, and

it is unfit to exist among a free people .

"We, therefore, . . . solemnly absolve ourselves from all allegiance to the **masonic institution**. . . . and in support of these resolutions, . . . and the safety of individuals against the usurpations of all **SECRET SOCIETIES** and open force, and against the 'vengeance' of the **masonic institution**. . . .

"Resolved, That however beneficial

**SECRET SOCIETIES AND COMBINATIONS** may have been considered in the dark ages. . . yet in this enlightened age and country, they become not only useless to their members, but **DANGEROUS TO THE GOVERNMENT.**"

On September 26, 1828, an article concerning the "Freemasons, Jesuits & Jews of Portugal" appeared in the *Wayne Sentinel*. The following statements are taken from that article:

"In reading the furious declamations of contending factions in the Peninsula, and particularly in Portugal, we should be led to believe, that the whole of society was composed of only two elements, **Freemasons** and Jesuits, or Apostolical that the one was determined to devour or extirpate the other and that the only duty of **government** consisted in suppressing **lodges** or convents, in checking or destroying the brothers of the **CRAFT**, or the brothers of the Cloister. . . . If you listen to the party which lately welcomed Don Miguel as their 'tutelar angel,' . . . the **Freemasons** have been the cause of all the 'seditions, privy cons[p]iracies, and rebellions,' which, for the last thirty years, have afflicted Europe. . . . The **Free-masons** are, therefore, radically and essentially, demagogues, jacobins,

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**conspirators, assassins, infidels, traitors, and atheists.** Their **BAND of union** is formed of the broken cement of existing order their **secret** is the watch-word of sedition and rebellion their object is anarchy and **PLUNDER**. . . unless they are suppressed, there will

soon be neither religion, morals, literature, nor civilized society left!" (Wayne Sentinel, September 26, 1828)

*The Morgan Investigator*, published in Batavia, New York. carried these statements:

"

'BEWARE OF SECRET COMBINATIONS.'

"These are the dying words of General George Washington . . . there is something in the principles of masonry that tends to distract the mind and lead to the perpetration of **CRIMES** . . .

"If all then are convinced that the existence of this institution is not only unnecessary but **DANGEROUS** to the best interests of society, let **masons** honestly and honorably confess by leaving its ranks, . . ." (*The Morgan Investigator*, March 29, 1827, page 1)

In another article published in the same paper we find the following statement:

"I believe the institution of masonry **DANGEROUS TO OUR LIBERTIES**, and I think they have gone far enough in the march towards supreme power to receive a check."

The same paper called the Masons "an organized **BAND** of desperadoes" and spoke of the "dark and treasonable plot, formed against the lives of our citizens and the laws of our country." The following appeared in a book entitled, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Tendency of Speculative Free-Masonry*:

"4.

Masonry is a **MURDEROUS** institution. It is based on laws which require murder. Those laws which support the system, demand and take the life of a fellow creature, without any reference to the laws of God or the land; . . . Who then does not see, that the very principles, spirit, and essence, of this ancient fraternity, are **MURDEROUS!**

"5. Those who join the institution, solemnly swear that, if they violate 'any part' of their oaths, they will submit to be **executed** in the manner the oaths prescribe. . . . What a disgrace to the dignity of man; that in this land of bibles, and dear bought independence, a society should exist which claims the

prerogative of sacrificing human beings, without any reference to the God of the bible, or to the laws of our boasted freedom! Such, I am bold to say, is **the masonic society**. . . .

"6.

The masonic society is inconsistent with our free institutions. Every mason's life, according to the oaths he has taken, is the property of masons; consequently not that of his country. Is this consistent with a Republican Government? . . .

"7. Some sentiments embraced in **masonic oaths** deserve particular notice. . . . If a murderer or any other criminal who is a **master mason** is brought before the bar of justice to be tried, and gives this singal [signal] of distress; if the judge or prosecutor or any of the jurors are master masons, and see him give this sign, they are under the solemnities of an oath,

to risk their lives to save his." (*An Inquiry into the Nature and Tendency of Speculative Free-Masonry*, by John G. Stearns, New York, 1829, pp. 76, 77 and 79)

In an address which was delivered September 11, 1829, we find the following:

"This day has been set apart, as an occasion for assaulting the proud institution simultaneously throughout the state; for lifting against it the voices of freemen in all our borders. . . . He [Morgan] laid down **his life** for his country; his **WIDOW** and his **ORPHANS**, are alive to bear witness. He fell by the hand of **masonic violence**, pointing with the finger of death to the **robber of our equal rights**, and the midnight **foe of our liberties**.

". . . The horrors of the Revolution in France are, however, clearly traced to the hand of this midnight **Order**, and the present convulsed state of Mexico is principally owing to the **secret operations** of two **masonic** parties, the **York masons**, and the **Scotch masons**. The injury done to our national character by Burr's conspiracy was of the highest magnitude; the private correspondence of that conspiracy was carried on in the **Royal Arch cypher**, which is a proof that the agents were exalted **Freemasons**. . . . and never was an arrow sped with keener point, that this fact of Burr's conspiracy, to enter the joints of the harness, and to pierce the heart of **treasonable Freemasonry**." (*The Anti-Masonic Review and Monthly Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 10, pp. 296-297)

On March 14, 1828, the *Wayne Sentinel* reported that an "anti-Masonic" newspaper was to begin publication in Joseph Smith's neighborhood. It was to be known as *The Palmyra Freeman*. We have only had access to photographs of a few pages from this paper, but these pages have led us to the conclusion that it was extremely anti-Masonic. On December 2, 1828, this statement appeared in the *Palmyra Freeman*:

"  
Our Government and Country will **BE DESTROYED**, unless the people put down **MASONRY** root and branch." (*Palmyra Freeman*, December 2, 1828)

In the same issue we find the following:

"And what will the people of this country think of themselves ten or twenty years hence, if they should suffer themselves to be duped, and do not [now?] unite hand and heart, to put down a **secret society**, which, if again suffered to get fairly the ascendancy will crush them and their liberties together.

On November 10, 1829, this statement appeared in the *Palmyra Freeman*:

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*"Masonry, thank God, is now before the world in all her naked deformity!*

*a SECRET COMBINATION to destroy liberty and religion, . . ." (Palmyra Freeman, November 10, 1829)*

Now, when we look at the *Book of Mormon* we see that it is filled with references to **secret societies**. The Jaredites "formed a **secret combination**" (Ether 8:18), and the Nephites and Lamanites had a "**secret band**" (Helaman 8:28) known as the Gadianton robbers. Furthermore, the *Book of Mormon* warns the American people that a "**secret combination**" (Ether 9:24) would be among them.

In the *Book of Mormon*, Ether 8:14, we read:

*"And it came to pass that **they all sware unto him**, by the God of heaven, and also by the heavens, and also by the earth, **and BY THEIR HEADS**, that whoso should vary from the assistance which Akish desired **should lose his head**; and whoso should **divulge** whatsoever thing Akish made known unto them, the same **should lose his life**."*

According to an expose of Masonry published in the *Wayne Sentinel* on March 14, 1828, the "Obligation of the Seventh, or Royal Arch degree" contained these words:

*". . . I promise and **swear**, that I will **aid and assist** a companion Royal Arch mason wherever I shall see him engaged in any difficulty so far as to extricate him from the same, whether he be **RIGHT OR WRONG**. Furthermore do I promise and **swear**, that a companion Royal Arch mason's **secrets** given me in charge as such, and I knowing him to be such, shall remain as secure and inviolable in my breast as in his own, when he communicated it to me,*

*Murder and Treason NOT excepted. . . . binding myself under the no less penalty than to have my **SKULL STRUCK OFF**, and my brains exposed . . ."*

Another oath contained the words, ". . .binding myself under no less penalty than to have **my head struck off**. . ." The same issue of the *Wayne Sentinel* also stated that "the candidate is . . . presented with a human skull and told he must submit to the degradation of drinking his 5th libation from the skull. . ."

In the *Book of Mormon* we read:

*"But behold, **Satan** did stir up the hearts of the more part of the Nephites, insomuch that they did unite with **those bands of robbers**, and did enter into their **covenants** and their **oaths**, that they would*

*protect and preserve one another in whatsoever difficult circumstances they should be*

placed, that they should not suffer for their murders, and their plunderings, and their stealings.

"And it came to pass that they did have their **signs**, yea, **their secret signs**, and their **secret words**; and this that they might distinguish a brother who had entered into the **covenant**, that whatsoever wickedness his brother should do he should not be injured by his brother, nor by those who did belong to his **band**, who had taken this **covenant**." (Book of Mormon, Helaman 6:21-22)

The Masons, of course, had secret signs and words. In fact, William Morgan's expose stated that "the signs, due-guards, grips, words, pass-words, and their several names comprise pretty much all the secrets of Masonry, . . ." (*Freemasonry Exposed*, page 55) On page 68 we find this statement concerning the word "*Shibboleth*": "This word was also used by our ancient brethren to DISTINGUISH a friend from foe, . . ."

As we have already shown, the Masons were accused of being "dangerous to our government," and some people felt that unless they were "suppressed, there will soon be neither religion, morals, literature, nor civilized society left!" (*Wayne Sentinel*, September 26, 1828) The *Book of Mormon* paints a similar picture concerning secret societies:

"And

they did set at defiance the law and the rights of their country; and they did **covenant** one with another to **destroy the governor**, and to establish a king over the land, that the land should no more be at **liberty** but should be subject unto kings." (3 Nephi 6:30)

In Ether 8:22 we read that "whatsoever nation shall uphold such **SECRET COMBINATIONS**, . . . shall be **DESTROYED**." In verse 25 of the same chapter we read that "whosoever buildeth it up seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries, . . ."

Because of the Morgan affair the Masons were accused of murder and shielding the guilty. John G. Stearns called Masonry "**a MURDEROUS institution**." (*An Inquiry into the Nature and Tendency of Speculative Free-Masonry*, page 76) The *Book of Mormon* speaks of "**MURDEROUS combinations**" (Ether 8:23), "**secret murders**" (3 Nephi 9:9), and in 3 Nephi 6:29 we read that the wicked entered "into a covenant to destroy them, and to deliver those who were guilty of murder from the grasp of justice, . . . Moroni, who was supposed to have lived about 400 A.D., claimed that the Lord revealed to him the condition of the Gentiles in the last days:

"And it shall come in a day when the blood of saints shall cry unto the Lord, because of **SECRET COMBINATIONS** and the works of darkness.

. . . . .

"Yea, why do ye build up your **secret abominations** to get gain, and cause that **widows should mourn** before the Lord, and also



orphans to mourn before the Lord, and also the **blood of their fathers** and **their husbands** to cry unto the Lord from the ground, for **vengeance** upon your heads?" (Book of Mormon, Mormon 8:27 and 40)

These verses were, no doubt, referring to Freemasonry. Ether 8:23-25 seems to be a warning against Masonry:

"Wherefore, O ye Gentiles, . . . suffer not that these **murderous combinations** shall get above you, which are built up to get power and gain and the work, yea, even the **work of destruction** come upon

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you, . . . to your overthrow and destruction if ye shall suffer these things to be.

"Wherefore, the Lord commandeth you, when ye shall see these things come among you that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situation, because of this **SECRET COMBINATION** which shall be among you; or wo be unto it, because of

the blood of them who have been slain; for they cry from the dust for vengeance upon it, and also upon those who built it up.

"For it cometh to pass that whoso buildeth it up

seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries; and it bringeth to pass the **destruction of all people**, . . ." (Ether 8:23-25)

This warning reminds us of the words attributed to George Washington: "**Beware of SECRET COMBINATIONS.**" (*The Morgan Investigator*, March 29, 1827) The words "**SECRET COMBINATIONS**" are found in the *Book of Mormon* in the following places: 2 Nephi 9:9, 26:22; Alma 37:30-31; Helaman 3:23; 3 Nephi 4:29; Mormon 8:27; Ether 8:19, 22, 9:1, 13:18, 14:8, 10. These words were frequently used with regard to Masonry. In fact, newspapers published in Joseph Smith's neighborhood speak of "**SECRET COMBINATIONS**" (see *Wayne Sentinel*, July 18, 1828, and *Palmyra Freeman*, November 10, 1829). The *Wayne Sentinel* for July 18, 1828, uses the words "**SECRET SOCIETIES**" and the *Palmyra Freeman*, December 2, 1828, calls the Masons a "**SECRET SOCIETY.**" The *Book of Mormon* uses the words "**SECRET SOCIETY**" in the following places: 3 Nephi 3:9; Ether 9:6, 11:22.

The Masons were sometimes accused of being a "**BAND**" and it was claimed that one of their objects was to "**PLUNDER**" (*Wayne Sentinel*, Sept. 26, 1828). The *Book of Mormon* speaks of the "**BAND of Gadianton**" (Helaman 11:10), who "did commit **murder and PLUNDER**" (Helaman 11:25).

The word "**CRAFT**" was frequently used with regard to Masonry. The *Book of Mormon* tells us that Gadianton was "expert in many words, and also in his **CRAFT**" (Helaman 2:4).

The Masons claimed that their ceremonies went back to "**ANCIENT**" times (*Masonry Exposed*, page 68). The *Book of Mormon* quotes Giddianhi (an evil man) as saying:

*"And behold, I am Giddianhi; and I am the governor of this the **secret society** of Gadianton; which **society** and the works thereof I know to be good; and they are of **ANCIENT date** and they have been handed down unto us." (3 Nephi 3:9)*

In the Masonic ritual the candidate has "a rope called a Cable-tow round his neck" ([Freemasonry Exposed, page 18](#)). In the *Book of Mormon* 3 Nephi 26:22, we read: "And there are also **secret combinations**, . . . according to the **combinations of the devil**, . . . and he leadeth them by the neck with a **flaxen cord**. . . ."

In their ceremonies the Masons wore "**A LAMBSKIN or white apron**" ([Freemasonry Exposed, page 24](#)). According to 3 Nephi 3:7, the Gadianton robbers wore "**A LAMBSKIN about their loins**" (3 Nephi 4:7).

Walter Franklin Prince suggested that the name Mormon may have been derived from the controversy over William Morgan's disappearance:

*"It is now sufficiently evident that the author of the Book of Mormon was, at the time he was writing it, powerfully obsessed by the ideas and emotions which characterized that popular movement which, beginning in western New York in 1826, was to subside last in the same region. What word would sink most indelibly into such a consciousness what but the name **MORGAN** itself? . . . precisely as '**Morgan**' is the masterword of the particular ideational and emotional complex of which we have been speaking, so **Mormon**, one of the reflected names, . . . is also the name of the composition as a whole." (The American Journal of Psychology, Vol. 28, pp. 378-379)*

Fawn Brodie points out that a corpse that was found on the shore of Lake Ontario was at first identified as that of William Morgan. Later, however, it was found to be the body of Timothy Monroe. Mrs. Brodie suggests that Joseph Smith may have "combined the first syllables of Morgan and Monroe" to make the name Mormon ([No Man Knows My History](#), page 64). We feel that this is a very good suggestion, for the *Wayne Sentinel* uses the two names in an article published November 2, 1827:

*"The investigation commenced at Gaines last Saturday was resumed on Monday at Batavia. where the body, being disinterred, was with the clothing, submitted for the third time to a jury. The result nullifies the verdict of the proceeding jury by showing the body to be NOT MORGAN'S but TIMOTHY MONROE'S."*

The names Morgan and Monroe (the *Wayne Sentinel* spells it Monro) were capitalized in the original, and the name Morgan was broken after the first syllable exactly as we have shown it. It would have been easy for Joseph Smith to have combined the first syllable in **MOR**gan with the first syllable in **MON**roe to make the name **MORMON**. It is interesting to note that Joseph Smith claimed that the name "Mormon" was composed from two words. He stated that the last part of the word i.e., "mon" is an "Egyptian" word which means "good," and "with the addition of more, or the contraction, mor, we have the word **MORMON**; which means, literally, more good." (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 4, p. 194) One man who had read our book, [Changes in Joseph Smith's History](#), made the following comments concerning this matter: "Smith claimed

that the word 'Mormon' was formed from the **Egyptian** word '**mon**' (which he said meant 'good') and the **English** word '**more**' contracted to 'mor' (together meaning 'more good'). How can this be when

there is no Egyptian word 'mon' which means good. Even if there were such an **Egyptian word**, how could it get combined with an English word here on the American continent sometime **before 400A.D.**? The English language did not develop until the middle ages and was totally unknown in the ancient middle east." In a letter dated April 1, 1965, the same man wrote "I might add a few words about Smith's definition of the word 'Mormon'. . . .the

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part I had reference to has been omitted from the **present Church History**, so I understand. While in the graduate department at John Hopkins University I made it a point to ask Dr. William F. Albright if there were

any Egyptian word 'mon' meaning 'good,' or anything resembling it with such a meaning. Dr. Albright is one of the world's leading authorities on the ancient near east and understood and offered courses in Egyptian. He assured me there was no such word. I wrote Dr. Sperry about this problem and he assured me he had 'no off-the-cuff answer' for this problem. (see letter enclosed). At the time Smith gave his definition Champollion was just working out the system of Egyptian hieroglyphics, so as far as Smith knew **no one could contradict him**. However, it should have been obvious, even without a knowledge of Egyptian, that an Egyptian word **could not** be combined with an English word and appear here in America (since it's used in the Book of Mormon) before 400 A.D., when there was no English language until centuries later."

Joseph Smith's *Book of Moses* published in modern editions of the *Pearl of Great Price* also contains material which reflects the controversy concerning Masonry:

*"And **Satan** said unto*

*Cain: Swear unto me by thy throat and if thou tell it **thou shalt die**; and swear thy brethren by their heads, . . .*

*"And **Cain** said: Truly*

*I am Mahan, the master of this great secret, that I may murder and get gain. Wherefore Cain was called MASTER MAHAN, . . .*

*"For Lamech having entered into a covenant with Satan, after the manner of Cain, wherein he became*

*MASTER MAHAN, master of that great secret which was administered unto Cain by **Satan**; . . .*

*"For, from the days of Cain, there was a **SECRET COMBINATION**, and their works were in the dark, and they knew every man his brother." (*Pearl of Great Price, Book of Moses, 5:29, 31, 49 and 51*)*

The statement, "**Swear unto me by thy throat**," is very interesting; for, according to an expose of Masonry published in the *Wayne Sentinel*. Nov. 10, 1826, the candidate had to swear by his throat:

*"To all of which I do most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, . . . binding myself*

under no less **penalty**, than to have **my throat cut across**; . . ."

Even more interesting are the words "**MASTER MAHAN**." They are so similar to the words "**MASTER MASON**" (*Freemasonry Exposed*, page 70) that we are almost forced to the conclusion that Joseph Smith had these words in mind.

S. H. Goodwin, a prominent Mason, made these statements concerning the relationship of the *Book of Mormon* to Masonry:

". . .the present writer is convinced that the years which saw the preparation and publication of the 'Golden Bible' of this new faith, also witnessed the very material prenatal influence of Masonry upon Mormonism, proof of which lies thickly sprinkled over the pages of the *Book of Mormon*. . . .

"To the present writer, the evidence of the Mormon prophet's reaction to the anti-Masonic disturbance is as clear and conclusive in the *Book of Mormon*, as is that which points out, beyond controversy, the region in which that book was produced, and establishes the character of the religious, educational and social conditions which constituted the environment of Joseph Smith. (*Mormonism and Masonry*, Salt Lake City, 1961, pp. 8-9)

Anthony W. Ivins, who was a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, made this statement in rebuttal to this charge:

"It is true that during the period of the translation and publication of the *Book of Mormon* Morgan disappeared. It is also true that the author of '*Mormonism and Masonry*' does not show that Joseph Smith, or any one of those who were directly associated with him in the translation and publication of the book ever attended an anti-Masonic meeting, had any knowledge whatever of the ritual of the Masonic fraternity, or participated in the most remote manner in the crusade which followed the disappearance of Morgan and consequently could not have made Masonry the basis upon which the book was written." (*The Relationship of "Mormonism" and Freemasonry*, pages 175-176)

It can now be shown that **Martin Harris** (a witness to the *Book of Mormon* who provided money for its publication) was influenced by the controversy over Masonry. The Mormon writer Richard L. Anderson makes this statement concerning Martin Harris:

"The same point is made by **his appointment** in 1827 on the Palmyra '**committee of vigilance**' by the Wayne County **anti-Masonic convention**, a cause long since discredited but which then attracted many public-spirited individuals." (*Improvement Era*, February 1969, page 20)

As a reference for this statement Dr. Anderson cites the *Wayne Sentinel* for Oct. 5, 1827. In the "anti-Masonic convention" Dr. Anderson speaks of the following resolution that was passed:

*"Resolved. That we conceive it a dereliction of our duty to give our suffrages for any office within the gift of the people to a **freemason** who has not publicly renounced the institution and principles of **freemasonry**, or to any person who approbates the institution or treats with levity, or attempts to palliate or screen the horrid transaction relative to the abduction of **William Morgan**. (Wayne Sentinel, October 5, 1827)*

Thus we see that one of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon was involved in the anti-Masonic excitement which followed Morgan's disappearance.

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## JOSEPH BECOMES A MASON

Although Joseph Smith's early writings are filled with material which condemns secret societies, the presence of the Danite band among the Mormons indicates that by 1838 his attitude toward secret societies had changed. The reader will remember that the Danites were a secret oath-bound society and that the members were to be punished with death if they made public the secrets of the order (see p. 52-65 of *The Mormon Kingdom Vol. 1*). When the Mormon leaders found themselves in serious trouble with the law because of the Danite band, Joseph Smith went back to the teachings of the *Book of Mormon* and publicly repudiated secret societies. In a letter written from Liberty Jail, dated March 25, 1839, Joseph Smith joined with four others in stating:

*"We further, caution our brethren, against the impropriety of the organization of bands of companies, by **covenant, oaths, penalties, or secrecies**, but let the time past of our experience and sufferings by the wickedness of Docter Avard suffice, and let our **covenants**, be that of the everlasting **covenant**, as it is contained in the holy writ, and the things which God has revealed unto us; pure friendship, always becomes weakened, the very moment you undertake to make it stronger by **penal oaths** and **secrecy**." (Times and Seasons, Vol. 1, page 133)*

After Joseph Smith went to Nauvoo, he again took an interest in secret societies. In fact, it was in Nauvoo that **Joseph Smith became a Mason**, formed the Council of 50, and established the secret Temple ceremony. Many of the converts to the Mormon Church were Masons or had been Masons in the past. The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated: "Many members of **secret societies** have joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, 3 Volumes in 1, page 113) On pages 357-358 of the same book, Dr. Widtsoe stated:

*"Many of the Saints were Masons, such as Joseph's brother Hyrum, Heber C. Kimball, Elijah Fordham, Newel K. Whitney, James Adams, and John C. Bennett. . . .*

*"With the acquiescence of the **Prophet**, members of the Church already **Masons** petitioned the **Grand Master** of Illinois for permission to set up **a lodge in Nauvoo**. In answer they were granted permission, in October, 1841, to hold lodge meetings; but it was March 15, 1842, before authority was given to set up a lodge in Nauvoo and to induct new members. **JOSEPH SMITH BECAME A MEMBER** ."*

Ebenezer Robinson seemed to blame John C. Bennett for the great interest which the Church leaders had in Masonry:

*"Heretofore, the church had strenuously opposed **secret societies**, such as **Free-Masons, Knights of Pithias**, and all that class of **secret societies**, not considering the '**Order of Enoch**' or '**Danites**' of that class; but after Dr. Bennett came into the church a great change of sentiment seemed to take place, . . .*

*a Masonic Lodge was organized with Hyrum Smith, one of the First Presidents of the church as **master**." (The Return, Vol. 2, No. 6, June, 1890, typed copy, page 126)*

However this may have been, Joseph Smith himself became a member of the Masonic fraternity. The following statement is recorded in Joseph Smith's *History* under the date of March 15, 1842:

*"In the evening*

*I RECEIVED THE FIRST DEGREE IN FREE MASONRY in the Nauvoo Lodge, assembled in my general business office." (History of the Church, Vol. 4, page 551)*

The next day Joseph Smith stated:

*"*

*I WAS WITH THE MASONIC LODGE AND ROSE TO THE SUBLIME DEGREE." (History of the Church, Vol. 4, page 552)*

The Mormons who joined the Masonic lodge soon found themselves in trouble with other members of the fraternity. S. H. Goodwin states:

*"Not long after this lodge had been set to work, rumors of unusual proceedings therein became a current. Report had it that the Nauvoo brethren set at naught certain established and well-known Masonic laws and usages. This gossip persisted and finally crystallized into open and unequivocal charges. On the 16th day of July following, Bodley Lodge No. 1, of Quincy, held a special meeting called for the purpose of considering the matter and taking such action as the facts might seem to warrant. After discussion, the sentiment of the meeting took the form of resolutions. One of these called upon*

*Grand Master Jonas to suspend the dispensation of Nauvoo Lodge until the annual communication of Grand Lodge. Another throws a little light back upon the events connected with the institution of that lodge. This resolution reads:*

*" 'Resolved: That Bodley Lodge No. 1, of Quincy, request of the Grand*

*Lodge of the state of Illinios, that a committee be appointed at the next annual meeting of said lodge to make enquiry into*

*the manner the officers of the Nauvoo Lodge, U.D. **were installed**, and by what authority the **Grand Master initiated**, passed and raised Messrs. Smith and Sidney Rigdon to the degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason, at one and the same time, and that the proceedings of the committee be reported for the benefit of this lodge.' "* (Mormonism and Masonry, by S. H. Goodwin, pages 28-29)

Finally, the Masons refused to allow the Mormons to continue "a Masonic Lodge at Nauvoo" (Mormonism and Masonry, page 34).

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One Masonic historian wrote: "If the **Lodge** had been suffered to work two years longer,

every Mormon in Hancock County would have been initiated.' " (History of Freemasonry in Illinois, p. 184, as quoted in Mormonism and Masonry, by S. H. Goodwin, p. 34) The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe admitted that "large numbers" had been received into the fraternity:

*"Meanwhile,*

*LARGE NUMBERS of Nauvoo citizens were inducted into the fraternity. Soon the Nauvoo Lodge had more members than all the other Illinios lodges together. It became the largest in the state. In this rapid growth, some **lodge ERRORS** appear to have been made."* (Evidences and Reconciliations, 3 Volumes in 1, page 358)

The Mormon writer E. Cecil McGavin made these statements in his book, *Mormonism and Masonry* (not to be confused with the book by Goodwin which bears the same name):

*"It is not surprising that they made a **few departures** from the ancient landmarks and introduced some **changes in the procedure** which brought upon them the full weight of **Masonic displeasure**. . . .*

*"At this time there were*

*only two hundred twenty-seven Masons in Illinois outside of Nauvoo. These were distributed among **eleven lodges**, making an average of twenty-one members in each loge. The largest lodge was in Springfield, with a membership of forty-three.*

*"*

*Within five months, the Mormons initiated two hundred eighty-six members in Nauvoo, and **forty-five** in the Rising Sun Lodge at Montrose, Iowa.*

*"*

*Thus there were more Masons in Nauvoo in a few weeks than there were in all other*

lodges in Illinois combined. (*Mormonism and Masonry*, by E. Cecil McGavin, Salt Lake City, 1956. p. 89-92)

On pages 104-106 of the same book, E. Cecil McGavin states:

"

*Masonry is an ancient institution. Its landmarks are sacred and must be preserved. From the distant past, its leaders have attempted to keep it inviolate. The slightest change in its regulations has been regarded with suspicion.*

*"The Mormons were **careless** in some respects, failing to realize the sanctity of the 'ancient landmarks' and feeling free to make **small innovations** without consulting the Grand Lodge. Such a step, though not intended to trample underfoot the honored customs of the past, was perfectly natural for them. Their religion was a revolutionary one. They never attempted to follow the religious pattern of the world,*

*being free to introduce many teachings and institutions that were not practiced in any other church.*

*"This spirit of freedom and newness of growth with no attempt to follow the theological path of the past, may have influenced them to*

*DEVIATE from the ancient landmarks of Masonry. . . .*

*"Since the Mormons were completely ignored by the Masons in neighboring towns and by the Grand Lodge also, they were likely to make many **errors** as they sought to put their lodge in motion. There was a spirit of freedom in all their religious activities, never for a moment feeling bound by the he traditions of the past, but always*

*free to make revolutionary changes in the matter of religious ritual and practice. This feeling may have crept into the lodge work and resulted in some changes that would be frowned upon by other Masons. The complaints about voting and initiations may have been **WELL FOUNDED**, yet those same mistakes were not uncommon in young lodges.*

*". . . On the question of voting, it is said that the ballot must be strictly secret and the voting must be unanimous. Each applicant must be voted for on a separate ballot. This was a slow and cumbersome method in comparison with the dispatch with which the voting was conducted in Church assemblies,*

*so it is not unlikely that they violated the strict Masonic regulation concerning balloting."*

Although Joseph Smith found himself in trouble with the Masons, he gave the Masonic signal of distress just before he was murdered. In his book concerning Masonry, William Morgan gives this information concerning what a Mason is supposed to do "in case of distress":

"

*The sign is given by raising both hands and arms to the elbows, perpendicularly, one on*



each side of the head, **the elbows forming a square**. The words accompanying this sign, in case of distress, are, 'O LORD, MY GOD! is there no help for the widow's son?' "  
([Freemasonry Exposed](#), page 76)

John D. Lee claimed that Joseph Smith used the exact words that a Mason is supposed to use in case of distress:

"**Joseph** left the door, sprang through the window, and cried out, '

OH, LORD, MY GOD, IS THERE NO HELP FOR THE WIDOW'S SON!' " ([Confessions of John D. Lee](#), photomechanical reprint of 1880 Edition, page 153)

Other accounts seem to show that Joseph Smith used the first four words of the distress cry. According to the *History of the Church*, Joseph Smith "fell outward into the hands of his murderers, exclaiming. '**O LORD, MY GOD!**' " (*History of the Church*, Vol. 6, page 618) Less than a month after Joseph and Hyrum Smith were murdered, the following appeared in the Mormon publication, *Times and Seasons*:

". . .with

uplifted hands they gave such **SIGNS OF DISTRESS** as would have commanded the interposition and benevolence of Savages or Pagans. They were both **MASONS** in good standing. Ye brethren of 'the mystic tie' what think ye! Where is our good **MASTER Joseph and Hyrum**? Is there a pagan, heathen, or savage nation on the globe that would not be moved on this great occasion, as the trees of the forest are moved by a mighty wind? Joseph's last exclamation was '**O LORD MY GOD!**' " (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 5, page 585)

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The Mormon writer E. Cecil McGavin admitted that Joseph Smith gave the Masonic signal of distress:

"When the enemy surrounded the jail, rushed up the stairway, and killed Hyrum Smith, Joseph stood at the open window, his martyr-cry being these words, 'O Lord My God!' This was **NOT** the beginning of a prayer, because Joseph Smith did not pray in that manner. This brave, young man who knew that death was near, started to repeat

**THE DISTRESS SIGNAL OF THE MASONS**, expecting thereby to gain the protection its members are pledged to give a brother in distress.

"In 1878, Zina D. Huntington Young said of this theme, 'I am the daughter of a Master Mason;

I am the widow of the Master Mason who, when leaping from the window of Carthage jail, pierced with bullets, **MADE THE MASONIC SIGN OF DISTRESS**, but those signs were not heeded except by the God of Heaven.' " (*Mormonism and Masonry*, by E. Cecil McGavin, page 17)

On page 16 of the same book, Mr. McGavin quotes from the *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, page 26, as follows:

"**JOSEPH**, leaping the fatal window,  
GAVE THE MASONIC SIGNAL OF DISTRESS.' "

In Utah the Masons will not allow a Mormon to become a member of their fraternity because of the things that happened in Nauvoo. Brigham Young once stated:

". . . I refer to the  
Freemasons. They have refused our brethren membership in their lodge, because they were polygamists." (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, page 328)

Although the Masons in Utah were disturbed with the Mormons because of polygamy, there are other reasons why they refused to allow Mormons to join their fraternity. One of the most important is that they feel that Joseph Smith stole part of the Masonic ritual and included it in his Temple ceremony. S.H. Goodwin made this statement:

"The observant **Craftsman** cannot be long among the Mormon people without noting the not infrequent use made of **certain emblems and symbols** which have come to be associated in the public mind with the **Masonic fraternity**. And now and again he will catch expressions and phrases in conversation, and meet with terms in literature, which are suggestive, to say the least. If he should continue his residence in Utah, he will sometimes be made aware of the fact, when shaking hands with a Mormon neighbor or friend, that there is a pressure of the hand as though some sort of a '**grip**' is being given. (*Mormonism and Masonry*, S.H. Goodwin, page 43)

According to E. Cecil McGavin, "Grand Master J.M. Orr of Utah" made this statement in 1878:

"  
We say to the priests of the Latter-day Church, you cannot enter our lodge rooms you surrender all to an unholy priesthood. You have heretofore sacrificed the sacred obligations of our beloved Order, and we believe you would do the same again. Stand aside; we want none of you. Such a wound as you gave **Masonry in Nauvoo** is not easily healed, and no Latter-day Saint is, or can become a member of our Order in this jurisdiction." (*Mormonism and Masonry*, page 7)

## MASONRY IN TEMPLE RITUAL

The relationship between the Mormon Temple ritual and Masonry is too close to be called a coincidence.

The fact that both Mormons and Masons have a temple in which they administer secret ceremonies is striking, but when we compare the ritual and learn that Joseph Smith was a Mason, we are forced to the conclusion that Joseph Smith borrowed from Masonry in establishing his Temple ceremony.

In this study we have had access to two books which give the Masonic ritual. They were reprinted by Ezra A. Cook Publications, Inc., Chicago, Illinois. The first is [Capt. William Morgan's Freemasonry Exposed](#) which was first published in 1827. (It should be remembered that the author of this book disappeared and that this set off the great controversy concerning Masonry.) The second is [Richardson's Monitor of Free-Masonry](#). This book was published some time after Morgan's expose, but it is important because it gives some of "the higher degrees" not mentioned by Morgan.

The following are some of the parallels between the ritual of the Masons and the Mormon Temple ceremony. Because some of the details of the Temple ceremony have been changed in recent years, we are using the pamphlet, *Temple Mormonism Its Evolution, Ritual and Meaning*, New York, 1931, to make our comparison.

1. Both the Masons and the Mormons have what is called "the five points of fellowship."

Mormons	Masons
<p>"The <b>five points of fellowship</b> are given by putting the inside of the right foot to the inside of the Lord's, the inside of your knee to his, laying your breast close to his, your left hands on each other's backs, and each one putting his mouth to the other's ear, in which position the Lord <b>whispers</b>:</p> <p>"Lord" This is the sign of the token:</p> <p>"Health to the navel, <b>marrow in the bones</b>, . . .</p> <p>(<i>Temple Mormonism</i>, page 22)</p>	<p>"He (the candidate) is raised on what is called the <b>five points of fellowship</b>, . . . This is done by putting the inside of your right foot to the inside of the right foot of the person to whom you are going to give the word, the inside of your knee to his, laying your right breast against his, your left hands on the back of each other, and your mouths to each other's right ear (in which position alone you are permitted to give the word), and whisper the word Mahhah-bone. . . He is also told that Mahhah-bone signifies <b>marrow in the bone</b>."</p> <p>(<i>Freemasonry Exposed</i>, pages 84-85)</p>

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The reader will note that the Mormon Temple ceremony still contains "**the five points of fellowship**" (see page 133 of this volume).

[Web-editor: The five points of fellowship have been removed from the Temple ceremony since this publication. See [#75 Messenger, Important Omission](#).] Masonic writers seem to be willing to speak of "the five points of fellowship." George Oliver stated: "Masons profess to be united in an indissoluble chain of sincere affection, called the **five points of fellowship**; . . ." (*The Antiquity of Freemasonry*, p. 168, as quoted by McGavin in *Mormonism and Masonry*, page 9) A Masonic poet has even written a poem entitled. "The Five Points of Fellowship." In a footnote to this poem we find this statement:

"The paraphrase embodies the following ancient form of injunction. '**Foot to foot**

*(teaches) that we will not hesitate to go on foot and out of our way to aid and succor a needy Brother; **knee to knee**, that we will ever remember a Brother's welfare, in all our applications to Deity; **breast to breast**, that we will ever keep, in our breast, a Brother's secrets, when communicated to us as such, murder and treason excepted; **hand to back**, that we will ever be ready to stretch forth our hand to aid and support a falling Brother; cheek to cheek, or **mouth to ear**, that we will ever whisper good counsel in the ear of a Brother, . . . (The Poetry of Freemasonry, by Robert Morris, as quoted in Mormonism and Masonry, by E. Cecil McGavin, page 11)*

The words "marrow in the bones" are still used in the Mormon Temple ceremony. It is interesting to note that the woman who exposed the ceremony in 1846 stated that in 'one place something was spoken to me which I do not recollect the meaning was '**marrow in the bone**;' . . ." (*Warsaw Signal*, April 15, 1846).

*2. When the candidate receives "The First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood" he makes a promise similar to the oath taken in the "First Degree" of the Masonic ritual.*

#### **Mormons**

". . . we will not reveal any of the secrets of this, the first token of the Aaronic priesthood, with its accompanying name, sign or penalty. Should we do so, we agree that our throats be cut from ear to ear and our tongues torn out by their roots."

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 18)

#### **Masons**

". . . I will. . . never reveal any part or parts, art or arts, point or points of the secret arts and mysteries of ancient Freemasonry. . . binding myself under no less penalty than to have my throat cut across, my tongue torn out by the roots, . . ."

([Freemasonry Exposed](#), p. 21-22)

*3. In both ceremonies the thumb is drawn across the throat to show the penalty.*

#### **Mormons**

"Sign In executing the sign of the penalty, the right hand, palm down, is drawn sharply across the throat, . . ."

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 18)

#### **Masons**

"This is given by drawing your right hand across your throat, the thumb next to your throat, . . ."

([Freemasonry Exposed](#), p. 23)

*4. Those who receive the "First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood" give a grip that is similar to that used by the Masons in the "First Degree" of their ritual.*

#### **Mormons**

#### **Masons**

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"The Grip-Hands clasped, pressing the knuckle of the index finger with the thumb."

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 18)

"The right hands are joined together as in shaking hands and each sticks his thumb nail into the third joint or upper end of the forefinger; . . ."

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 23)

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| 5. Some of the wording concerning the "grip" is similar.

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### Mormons

". . . Peter now takes Adam by the right hand and asks:)

"Peter'**What is that?**'

"Adam'The first token of the Aaronic Priesthood.

"Peter'**Has it a name?**'

"Adam'**It has.**'

"Peter'**Will you give it to me?**'

"Adam'I can not, for it is connected with my new name, but this is the sign.' "

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 20)

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### Masons

"The Master and candidate holding each other by the grip, as before described. the Master says, '**What is this?**'

"Ans. 'A grip.'

" 'A grip of what?'

"Ans. 'The grip of an Entered Apprentice Mason.'

" '**Has it a name?**'

"Ans. '**It has.**'

" '**Will you give it to me?**'

"Ans. 'I did not so receive it, neither can I so impart it.' "

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 23-24)

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| 6. The oath of the "Second Token of the Aaronic Priesthood" is similar to that taken in the second degree of Masonry.

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### Mormons

"We and each of us do covenant and promise that we will not reveal the secrets of this, the Second Token of the Aaronic Priesthood, with its accompanying name, sign, grip or penalty. Should we do so, we agree to have our breasts cut open and our hearts and vitals torn from our bodies and given to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field.' "

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 20)

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### Masons

" 'I, . . . most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, that I will not give the degree of a Fellow Craft Mason to any one of an inferior degree, nor to any other being in the known world, . . . binding myself under no less penalty than to have my left breast torn open and my heart and vitals taken from thence. . . to become a prey to the wild beasts of the field, and vulture of the air, . . . "

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, page 52)

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| 7. Both have a similar sign.

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### Mormons

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### Masons

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"**The sign** is made by placing the left arm on the square at the level of the shoulder, placing the right hand across the chest with the thumb extended and then drawing it rapidly from left to right and dropping it to the side."

(*Temple Mormonism*, p. 20)

"**The sign** is given by drawing your right hand-flat, with the palm of it next to your breast, across your breast from the left to the right side with some quickness, and dropping it down by your side;. . ."

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, page 53)

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| 8. Both have a similar grip.

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**Mormons**

"**The Grip** is given by clasping the hand and pressing the thumb in the hollow between the first and second knuckles of the hand."

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 20)

**Masons**

". . . **the pass-grip**, is given by taking each other by the right hand, as though going to shake hands, and each putting his thumb between the fore and second fingers where they join the hand, and pressing the thumb between the joints."

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, page 54)

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| 9. In both cases a "name" is used.

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**Mormons**

"**The name** is the given name of the candidate."

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 20)

**Masons**

". . . **the name** of it is Shibboleth."

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, page 54)

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| 10. The promise made when receiving the "First Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood" resembles the oath given by the Masons in the third or "Master Mason's Degree."

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**Mormons**

"Peter>We and each of us do covenant and promise that we will not reveal any of the secrets of this, the First Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, with its accompanying name, sign or penalty. Should we do so, we agree that our bodies be cut asunder in the midst and all our bowels gush out."

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 20)

**Masons**

"I, . . . most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, in addition to my former obligations, that I will not give the degree of a Master Mason to any of an inferior degree, nor to any other being in the known world, . . . binding myself under no less penalty than to have my body severed in two in the midst, and divided to the north and south, my bowels burnt to ashes. . ."

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 73-75)

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| 11. The sign of the penalty is similar in both cases. (The description of this sign which appears in *Temple Mormonism* is not completely accurate; therefore, we are using the account that appeared in the *Salt Lake Tribune*. The reader can see that this is the way the

| sign is given today. See page 131 of [The Mormon Kingdom Vol. 1.](#))

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**Mormons**

"In this, the left hand is placed palm upright, directly in front of the body, there being a right angle formed at the elbow; the right hand, palm down, is placed under the elbow of the left; then drawn sharply across the bowels, and both hands are dropped at the side."

(*Salt Lake Tribune*, Feb. 12, 1906)

**Masons**

"The Penal Sign is given by putting the right hand to the left side of the bowels, the hand open, with the thumb next to the belly, and drawing it across the belly, and letting it fall; this is done tolerably quick. This alludes to the penalty of the obligation: 'Having my body severed in twain,' etc."

([Freemasonry Exposed](#), page 77)

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| 12. In both cases a "name" is used.

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**Mormons**

"**The Name** of this token is the Son, meaning the Son of God."

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 20)

**Masons**

". . . the word or **name** is Tubal Cain."

([Freemasonry Exposed](#), page 77)

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| 13. The conversation at the "veil" in the Temple ceremony is very similar to that of the "Fellow Craft Mason" when he is questioned concerning the "grip."

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**Mormons**

"Lord'**What is this?**'

"Endowee'The second token of the Melchizedek PriesthoodThe **Patriarchal Grip** or Sure Sign of the Nail."

"Lord'**Has it a name?**'

"Endowee'**It has.**'

"Lord'**Will you give it to me?**'

"Endowee'I can not for I have not yet received it.' "

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 22)

**Masons**

". . . '**What is this?**'

"Ans. '**A grip.**'

" 'A grip-of what?'

"Ans. '**The grip** of a Fellow Craft Mason.'

" '**Has it a name?**'

"Ans. '**It has.**'

" '**Will you give it to me?**'

"Ans. 'I did not so receive it, neither can I so impart it.'

([Freemasonry Exposed](#), page 54)

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| 14. Both the Masons and the Mormons have a vow regarding "chastity."

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**Mormons****Masons**

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"You and each of you do covenant and promise that you will not have sexual intercourse with any of the opposite sex except your lawful wife or wives who are given you by the holy priesthood." "

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 21)

"Furthermore do I promise and swear that I will not violate the chastity of a Master Mason's wife, mother, sister, or daughter, I knowing them to be such, nor suffer it to be done by others, if in my power to prevent it."

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, pages 74-75)

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15. The grip known as "The Sign of the Nail" seems to be similar to one given by Masons in one of their higher degrees.

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### Mormons

"**The Grip** is given by placing the thumb of back of hand and the tip of forefinger in the centre of palm, representing the piercing of the hand by a nail. It is called '**The Sign of the Nail.**' "

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 20)

### Masons

"Grand Commander now explains **the grip** and word of a Knight of Malta. He says to candidate Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and feel the print of the nails; [they join right hands, and force the first finger into the centre of the palm;] . . ."

(*Richardson's Monitor of Free-Masonry*, page 126)

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16. The "Oath of Vengeance" which used to be used in the Mormon Temple ceremony resembles an oath in one of the higher degrees of Masonry.

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### Mormons

"You and each of you do solemnly promise and vow that you will pray, and never cease to pray, and never cease to importune high heaven to avenge the blood of the prophets. . ."

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 21)

### Masons

"We promise and swear, by the living God, always supreme, to revenge the death of our ancestor; . . ."

(*Richardson's Monitor of Free-Masonry*, page 188)

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17. Both Mormons and Masons change clothing before going through their rituals.

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### Mormons

### Masons

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"The candidate, being directed to these washing and dressing rooms and having divested himself of all his clothing, awaits his time in the bath. . .

"The candidate then retires to the dressing room, where he puts on

a shirt and a pair of white pants and white stockings."

(*Temple Mormonism*, pages 14-15)

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"The candidate during the time is divested of all his apparel (shirt excepted) and furnished with a pair of drawers kept in the lodge for the use of candidates. The candidate is then blindfolded, his left foot bare, his right in a slipper, his left breast and arm naked, and a rope called a Cable-tow round his neck. . ."

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, page 18)

| 18. Both Mormons and Masons use an apron.

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### Mormons

"Adam (Turning to the audience) 'In your bundles brethren and sisters, you will each find an apron, you will now put it on.' "

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 17)

### Masons

"The Master returns to his seat while the Wardens are examining the candidate, and **gets a lambskin or white apron** , presents it to the candidate, and observes, 'Brother, I now present you with **a lambskin or white apron**. It is an emblem of innocence, and the badge of a Mason. . ."

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, page 24)

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| 19. In one of the higher degrees the Masons anoint the candidate. This is somewhat similar to the anointing ceremony in the Mormon Temple ritual.

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### Mormons

### Masons

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"As **the candidate is washed**, the officiant hurries through the lustration ritual. . . the candidate is passed on to another attendant and is anointed with oil. The oil is very definitely applied to the various organs of his body. The pronouncements used in this ceremony are much the same as those used in the lustration ritual."

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 15)

"Master orders the basin of perfumed water and a clean napkin to be brought to him, and directs candidate to wash his hands, which he does. . . .

"Master takes a box of perfumed **ointment** and

anoints candidate on his head, eye, mouth, heart, the tip of his right ear, hand, and foot, and says You are now, my dear brother, received a member of our society; . . ."

(*Richardson's Monitor of Free-Masonry*, page 167)

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| 20. Both Mormons and Masons give what they call a "new name" to the candidate.

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**Mormons**

"With these garments I give you **a new name** which is never to be divulged to anyone. The name I shall give you is \_\_\_\_\_.' "

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 15)

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**Masons**

"I also present you with **a new name**; it is CAUTION; . . ."

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, page 25)

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| 21. In the Mormon Temple ceremony the candidate cannot pass through the veil until he has as given certain signs and words. In the Royal Arch Degree the Masons use **veils**.

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**Mormons**

**Masons**

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"The candidate is now taken to one of the openings between the pillars by one of the Temple workers, who gives three raps with a mallet on the pillar. The Lord parts the veil slightly and asks what is wanted.

"Temple Worker" The man Adam having been true and faithful in all things now desires

to converse with the Lord through the veil.'

"Lord" See that his garments are properly marked, **present him at the veil**, and his request shall be granted.'

"Attendants or Temple workers prompt the candidate in **his answers and grips**. . . .

"The Endowee is then taken to the **opening** by the attendant, who gives three more raps with the mallet.

"Lord" What is wanted?'

"Attendant" Adam, having conversed with the Lord **through the veil**, now desires to **enter** his presence.'

"Lord" Admit him.'

"As he says this

he extends his hand and welcomes the candidate into the Glory room."

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 22)

"Principal Sojourner Companions, we will pass on, and make an alarm at the Third Veil. [Stamps nine times.]

"Master of **the Third Veil** Who comes there? Who dare approach **this Third Veil** of our sacred Tabernacle?

"Principal Sojourner Three weary sojourners from Babylon, who have come to assist in the rebuilding of the house of the Lord, without the hope of fee or reward.

"Master of **Third Veil** How do you expect to enter?

"Principal Sojourner By the **words, sign, and word of exhortation** of the Master of the **Second Veil**.

"Master of Third Veil Give them.

"Principal Sojourner Shem, Japeth and Adoniram. [**Thrusts his hand** into his bosom as Master of Second Veil had done.]

"Master of Third Veil They are right. You can **enter the Third Veil**.

**"The candidates enter."**

(*Richardson's Monitor of Free-Masonry*, pages 76-77)

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22. In the Mormon Temple ceremony a man represents Adam. The Masons also have a man who personates Adam in the degree of "Knight of the Sun."

### Mormons

"Elohim. . . 'This man who is now being operated upon is Michael. . . When he awakes he. . . will be known as Adam.' "

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 16)

### Masons

"Thrice Puissant Grand Master, **representing Father Adam**, is stationed in the east."

(*Richardson's Monitor of Free-Masonry*, page 185)

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23. In the Mormon Temple ceremony a man represents God. In the Mason's Royal Arch Degree a man "personates the **Deity**."

### Mormons

### Masons

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"When all is quiet, a man dressed in white flannels, **representing Elohim**, come from behind the curtain. . ."

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 15)

"One of the members now personates **the Deity**, behind the bush, and calls out Moses! Moses!"

(*Richardson's Monitor of Free-Masonry*, page 73)

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24. Both the Mormons and the Masons consider the square and the compass to be extremely important. The marks of the square and the compass appear on the Mormon Temple garments and on the veil.

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### Mormons

"We now have the veil explained to us. We are told that it represents the veil of the temple. The marks are the same as those on the garments the compass on the left and the square on the right side."

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 22)

### Masons

". . .the three great lights in Masonry are the Holy Bible, **Square and Compass**. . . . **the Square**, to square our actions, and **the Compass** to keep us in due bounds with all mankind."

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, page 22-23)

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Even a Mormon writer, E. Cecil McGavin, is willing to admit that the "square and the compass" appear on Mormon Temple clothing:

"It is universally known that Mormon temple clothing contain certain marks of the priesthood, including the **SQUARE AND COMPASS**." (*Mormonism and Masonry*, page 72)

25. In the Masonic ritual the point of the compass is pressed against the left breast of the candidate. The Mormon temple garment has the mark of the compass on the left breast.

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### Mormons

"The marks are the same as those on the garments **the compass on the left**. . ."

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 22)

### Masons

"The candidate then enters, the Senior Deacon at the same time pressing his naked left breast with the point of the compass, . . ."

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, page 19)

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26. The angle of the square is pressed against the right breast in the Masonic ritual. The mark of the square appears on the right breast of the Mormon Temple garment.

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### Mormons

### Masons

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". . . **the square on the right side, . . .**"

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 22)

"As he enters, **the angle of the square** is pressed hard against his naked **right breast, . . .**"

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, page 50)

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| 27. *A mallet is used by both the Masons and the Mormons in their ceremonies.*

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**Mormons**

". . .one of the Temple workers, . . . gives three raps with a mallet. . ."

(*Temple Mormonism*, page 22)

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**Masons**

". . . he gives a rap with the common gavelor mallet, . . ."

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, page 11)

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Other parallels between the Mormon Temple ceremony and the Masonic ritual could be shown, but these should be sufficient to convince the reader that Joseph Smith borrowed from the Masons when he established the endowment ceremony.

In 1934 Anthony W. Ivins, who was a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, wrote a book entitled, "*The Relationship of Mormonism and Freemasonry*." On page 89 of this book, the following statement appears:

*"Whether there are resemblances between the ordinances administered in the temples of the Church and those administered in Masonic temples, the writer does not know. He has made **NO EFFORT TO FIND OUT**. It is **NOT** his business to know. While there are many Masons who are members of the Church, he has not at any time asked one of them for information, nor has any one of them ever proffered it. He has read the criticism of no writer who has written on the subject, his limited knowledge has been derived from books written by recognized Masonic authorities. Were he in possession of knowledge of ceremonies regarded as private and sacred by Masons his respect for the men who are connected with the order would seal his lips. . . .*

*the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was NOT influenced by Masonry, either in its doctrines, organization, or the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon." (The Relationship of "Mormonism" and Freemasonry, page 89)*

We feel that Anthony W. Ivins' own statement shows that he was not qualified to write a book concerning "*The Relationship of 'Mormonism' and Freemasonry*" If he "made no effort to find out" what went on in the Masonic ceremonies, how could he know that Mormonism "was not influenced by Masonry"?

The Mormon writer E. Cecil McGavin has written a book which is far better than that written by Anthony W. Ivins. Although we cannot agree with many of his conclusions, we feel that he has compiled a great deal of material that is relevant to the subject. Mr. McGavin is even willing to admit that there are some similarities between Mormonism and Masonry:

*"Numerous, indeed, were the early references to the Temple ritual in the sermons and writings of Joseph Smith. Though*

*a few rudimental principles may have been similar to the Masonic ritual, he opened a vast, new field of wisdom that had certainly been 'hidden for generations.' " (Mormonism and Masonry, page 148)*

On pages 196-197 of the same book, E. Cecil McGavin states:

*"**THE MORMONS**, the American Indians, the ancient Essenes, and the early Druids are not the only ones*

*who have 'MASONIC' symbols and PRACTICES IN THEIR RITUALS. . . .*

*"The Odd Fellows and other fraternal orders have their*

*SECRET SIGNS, GRIPS, TOKENS, AND PASSWORDS. The Masons certainly have no monopoly on that vast field of ritual and symbolism that arose during the childhood of the human race and spread into all countries. . . .*

*"*

*It is EVIDENT that the MASONIC ritual embraces a few features that RESEMBLE the rudimental ceremonies of the TEMPLE ENDOWMENT, yet these few points of similarity are largely restricted to the rituals pertaining to the Aaronic priesthood." (Mormonism and Masonry, p. 196-197)*

In the preface to the same book, Mr. McGavin stated:

*"Masons who visit the Temple Block in Salt Lake City are impressed by what they call the Masonic emblems displayed on the outside of the MORMON TEMPLE.*

*"*

*YES, THE 'MASONIC EMBLEMS' ARE DISPLAYED ON THE WALLS OF THE TEMPLE the sun, moon, and stars, 'Holiness to the Lord,' the two right hands clasped in fellowship, the All-seeing eye, Alpha and Omega, and the beehive. Masonic writers tell us the Mormon Temple ritual and their own are slightly **similar** in some respects.*

*"Without any apologies we frankly admit that there may be*

*SOME TRUTH IN THESE STATEMENTS.*

*"Yes, the public is entitled to an explanation of these mysteries and coincidences."*

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made this comment:

"Fourth,

*THAT THERE ARE SIMILARITIES IN THE SERVICE OF THE TEMPLE AND SOME SECRET ORGANIZATIONS MAY BE TRUE.*" (*Evidences and Reconciliations, 3 Volumes in 1, p. 112*)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts gave the following testimony regarding the Temple ceremony in the "Reed Smoot Case":

"The CHAIRMAN. The obligations and covenants, whatever they are, then, you are not at liberty to disclose?

"Mr. ROBERTS. No, sir. I would be led to regard those obligations as similar to those who perhaps have passed through

MASONIC FRATERNITIES, OR ARE MEMBERS OF MASONIC FRATERNITIES.

"The CHAIRMAN. Then your church organization in that particular is a sort of **MASONIC FRATERNITY?**

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"Mr. ROBERTS. **IT IS ANALOGOUS**, perhaps, **in some of its features.**" (*Reed Smoot Case, Vol. 1, page 741*)

Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the Brigham Young University, has made this statement concerning Mormonism and Masonry:

"Among the first to engage in the Latter-day Temple work were many members of the **Masons**, a society that 'is not, and does not profess to be, a religion,' but whose rites present

UNMISTAKABLE PARALLELS TO THOSE OF THE TEMPLE. Yet, like the Indians, those men experienced only an expansion of understanding." (*What Is a Temple, Brigham Young University Press, 1968, page 247*)

In footnote 71 on page 248 of the same work. Dr. Nibley stated:

"Pending the exhaustive study that the subject deserves, we will only say here, that an extensive reading of Masonic and Mormon teachings and history should make it clear to any reader that the former is the **shadow**, the latter the **substance**. The one is **literal**, the other **allegorical**."

Since many members of the Mormon Church were Masons and were familiar with its ritual, Joseph Smith must have realized that he might be accused of stealing the ceremonies from Masonry. In what was apparently, a move to offset this criticism, Joseph Smith claimed that Masonry once had the true endowment and that it had become corrupted through the passage of time. E. Cecil McGavin gives us this information:

*"In the diary of Benjamin F. Johnson, an intimate friend and associate of Joseph Smith, it is recorded that 'Joseph told me that Freemasonry was the **APOSTATE ENDOWMENT**, as sectarian religion was the apostate religion.' Elder Heber C. Kimball, who had been a **Mason** for many years, related that*

*after Joseph Smith became a Mason, he explained to his brethren that MASONRY HAD BEEN TAKEN FROM THE PRIESTHOOD." (Mormonism and Masonry, page 199)*

The last part of McGavin's information may have come from Heber C. Kimball's daughter, for she stated that "The Prophet Joseph after becoming a Mason said that Masonry had been taken from the Priesthood." (*Woman's Exponent*, Vol. 12, page 126, as quoted in *Mormonism and Masonry*, by E. Cecil McGavin, p. 99)

In trying to explain why their Temple ritual resembles that of the Masons, some Mormons claim that the endowment was given in Solomon's Temple and that the Masons preserved part of the ceremony. The Mormon Apostle Melvin J. Ballard has been quoted as saying the following:

" "

*Modern Masonry is a fragmentary presentation of the ancient order established by King Solomon, From whom it is said to have been handed down through the centuries.*

*" 'Frequent assertion that some details of*

*the Mormon Temple ordinances resemble Masonic rites, led him to refer to this subject.' the speaker declared, and he added, 'that he was not sorry there was such a **similarity**, because of the fact that the ordinances and rites revealed to Joseph Smith constituted a reintroduction upon the earth of the divine plan inaugurated in the Temple of Solomon in ancient days.' . . .*

" "

*Masonry is an apostasy from the ancient early order, just as so-called Christianity is an apostasy from the true Church of Christ.' " (The Salt Lake Herald, Dec. 29, 1919, as quoted in *Mormonism and Masonry*, by S.H. Goodwin, p. 49-50)*

The Mormon writer E. Cecil McGavin states:

*"Yes, there may be*

*some similarities in the rituals of the Mormons and the Masons, but those few likenesses in a vast realm of ritual cannot be explained by the fact that Joseph Smith attended a few*



meetings of the Masonic fraternity. In the light of the evidence supplied by Masonic historians, the conclusion is forced upon us that some of the features of the ritual once administered in Solomon's Temple have persisted in Masonry. . . .

"Since some of the **Masonic ritual** has descended from Solomon's time, altered and corrupted by the passing centuries, should one be surprised to find a few similarities when the Temple ritual is again established? . . .

"If the facts were available and the original sources extant, it would doubtless be apparent that everything in the ritual of the **Mormons** that the **Masons** say was taken from their ceremonies, dates back to Solomon's time." (Mormonism and Masonry, p. 192-194)

William J. Whalen has made these comments in rebuttal to E. Cecil McGavin's statements:

"McGavin accepts the most fanciful claims to antiquity put forth by such discredited Masonic historians as Mackey, Anderson and Oliver. These early Masonic writers went to claim Solomon, Adam, and most of the upright men of the Old Testament as early lodge brothers. Modern Masonic historians date the origin of the lodge in the **early eighteenth century** and recognize that these pioneer speculative Masons simply adopted the story of the building of Solomon's temple as a dramatic background for their initiations. Fred L. Pick and G. Norman Knight in their Pocket History of Freemasonry admit:

"Up to the present time, no even plausible theory of the 'origin' of the Freemasons has been put forward. The reason for this is probably that the Craft, as we know it, originated

among the Operative Masons of Britain. No doubt it incorporated from the earliest times shreds of ritual, folk-lore and even occult elements of time-immemorial antiquity. But it is almost certainly a British product and of British origin.

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"A few elements in modern Masonry here and there can be traced to the medieval guilds of working masons, but no one with a scholarly reputation would try to maintain that the **degree system** as it is worked now

and as it was worked in Nauvoo in 1842 could have possibly been derived from Solomonic rites." (The Latter-day Saints in the Modern Day World, New York, 1964, p. 203-204)

While some Mormon writers claim that Masonry dates back to the time of Solomon, Anthony W. Ivins, who was a member of the First Presidency of the Church, made this statement:

"As stated, the foregoing definitely proves that

*the origin of Freemasonry is shrouded in mystery, that the origin of the craft is based largely upon legends which are not authenticated by reliable evidence. If true, they take us back to the idolatrous worship and pagan practices of Egypt, Greece, and other semi-heathen nations of antiquity." (The Relationship of "Mormonism" and Freemasonry, p. 15)*

## ONLY ONE EXPLANATION

We feel that there is only one logical explanation for the many parallels between the Temple ceremony and Masonry, and that is that Joseph Smith borrowed from the Masons. The reader should remember that it was on **March 16, 1842**, that Joseph Smith stated: "

I was with the MASONIC LODGE and rose to the sublime degree." (*History of the Church*, Vol. 4. p. 552) **Less than two months later** (May 4, 1842), Joseph Smith introduced the **Temple endowment ceremony**. According to his own statement, it was in the **SAME ROOM** "where the Masonic fraternity meet occasionally":

*"Wednesday, 4. I spent the day in the upper part of the store, that is in my private office (so called because in that room I keep my sacred writings, translate ancient records, and receive revelations) and in my general business office,*

*or lodge room (that is where the MASONIC fraternity meet occasionally for want of a better place) in council with General James Adams, of Springfield, Patriarch Hyrum Smith, Bishops Newel K. Whitney and George Miller, and President Brigham Young and Elders Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards, instructing them in the principles and order of the Priesthood, attending to WASHINGS, ANOINTINGS, ENDOWMENTS and the communication **OF KEYS**, pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Melchisedek Priesthood, . . ." (History of the Church, Vol. 5, pages 1-2)*

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts stated:

*"A photogravure of the 'brick store'*

*in the upper story of which were instituted these sacred ceremonies accompanies this chapter. In addition to its use as a '**temple**' it was also the place of meeting for the Nauvoo Lodge of FREE MASONS." (Comprehensive History of the Church, Vol. 2, p. 135-136)*

One woman who was questioned concerning the Temple ceremony gave this testimony:

*"A. . . I said I received **endowments** in Nauvoo, **IN THE MASONIC HALL**, I rather think it was. Yes. sir, I think that was where it was. All the ceremony was performed in the*

*MASONIC HALL. THE WASHING WAS DONE IN THE MASONIC HALL, AND THE ANOINTING WITH OIL.*

*"Q. What furniture was in the Masonic Hall at the time the endowment ceremony was*

performed?

"A. Well, now, if you are expecting me to tell you all about the particulars of what was there in the way of furniture and what was done there,

you must not expect me to do it any more than you would expect a Mason or an Odd Fellow or any other member of a SECRET SOCIETY TO REVEAL THE SECRETS OF THEIR ORDER; . . ." (Temple Lot Case, pages 353-354)

Wilford Woodruff, the fourth President of the Mormon Church, testified:

"I do not say there were any washings in the Masonic Temple, but there were meetings held in the MASONIC TEMPLE. THERE WERE CERTAIN ORDINANCES PERFORMED THERE AT THE START, BECAUSE THERE WAS NO TEMPLE BUILT AT THAT TIME." (Temple Lot Case, page 299)

With this very close connection between Mormonism and Masonry, it is almost impossible to believe that Joseph Smith did not borrow from Masonry in establishing the Temple ceremony. E. Cecil McGavin, however, argues that Joseph Smith did not take an active part in Masonry, and therefore he could not have used Masonry to build up the Temple ritual:

"Whenever Joseph Smith spoke to his brethren about this subject, he was talking to members of the **Masonic fraternity**, hundreds of whom were active workers in the lodge, yet he never attended more than six meetings of the lodge after receiving

the third degree of Masonry on March 16, 1842. He never took an active part in the fraternity and never received a higher degree than that conferred upon him by Grand Master Jonas at the time the Nauvoo lodge was installed.

"It is sheer presumption to maintain that the signs, tokens, keys, and blessings of the Temple ritual, that he frequently spoke about, were to be taken from **Masonry**." (Mormonism and Masonry, page 135)

We feel that Joseph Smith probably had some knowledge of Masonry long before he joined the fraternity. Many of his close associates were Masons. The Mormon Apostle Heber C. Kimball was one of Joseph Smith's best friends. According to his daughter, Helen Mar Kimball, he joined the Masons in 1823:

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"It was in **1823** when he received the three first degrees of Masonry in the lodge at Victor Flats, Ontario Co., New York, and in **1824**, previous to receiving all of the rights up to the Royal Arch Masons, the Morgan affair broke out and the Masonic Hall in Canandaigua was burned by anti-Masons, and all their

*records consumed. . . . 'Not as many as three of us,' father says, 'could meet together, unless in secret, without being mobbed. I have been driven from my houses and possessions with many of my brethren belonging to that fraternity five times, by mobs led by some of their leading men. . . . I have been as true as an angel from the heavens to the **covenants** I made in the **lodge** at Victor. . . . I wish that all men were **Masons** and would live up to their profession, then the world would be in a much better state than it is now.' "*  
(*Woman's Exponent*, XII, 126, as quoted in *Mormonism and Masonry*, by E. Cecil McGavin, page 99)

Hyrum Smith, Joseph's brother, was also a member of the Masonic fraternity. Theodore Schroeder stated:

*"At the time of writing the Book of Mormon, Hyrum Smith a brother and co-conspirator of Joseph Smith **was already a mason**, as also were **Heber Kimball** and others of the neighborhood who became **leading Mormons**." (Authorship of the Book of Mormon, reprinted from the *American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 30, p. 66-72, January, 1919)*

The Mormon writer Pearson H. Corbett confirms the fact that Hyrum Smith was a Mason in New York:

*"*  
*Hyrum Smith received his first three degrees of Masonry in Ontario County, N.Y." (Hyrum Smith Patriarch, Salt Lake City, 1963, page 269)*

Joseph Smith could have learned about Masonry from either his brother or Heber C. Kimball. The Mormon publisher W.W. Phelps was another man who could have taught Joseph Smith a great deal about Masonry. According to Goodwin, Phelps was "a renouncing Mason of the anti-Masonic period and for a time, at least, a bitter foe of the Fraternity." (*Mormonism and Masonry*, page 14)

Joseph Smith probably became well informed concerning Masonry through the newspapers published in his area. The *Wayne Sentinel* contained a great deal about Masonry, and the *Palmyra Freeman* was regarded as an anti-Masonic newspaper. William J. Whalen made this interesting observation:

*"No doubt young Joe Smith witnessed the presentation of burlesque Masonic ceremonies at anti-Masonic rallies near his home. If he did not enjoy such spectacles or **hear exposes** of Masonic initiations, he would have been one of the **few** people in that part of New York State to have escaped the pervasive influence of the anti-Masonic movement." (The Latter-day Saints in the Modern Day World, pages 195-196)*

S. H. Goodwin stated:

*". . . he lived in the very heart of the region affected by the **anti-Masonic excitement**, 1826-1830; he was familiar with **exposes widely distributed** at that time; undoubtedly he, with his neighbors, had often seen 'renouncing Masons' present at great public gatherings what*

*was alleged to be all of the Masonic degrees; beyond question, he frequently attended mass meetings where the speakers vied with each other in depicting the blackness of the Masonic institution, and rehearsing portions of the work, and also, beyond doubt, he joined others in discussing the one topic of community gossip and interest." (Mormonism and Masonry, page 38)*

On page 51 of the same book, we find this statement:

*"The writer. . . holds that in 'Additional Studies in Mormonism and Masonry' are indicated the circumstances under which Joseph Smithin common with thousands of other profanesacquired a knowledge of what purported to be the Masonic ritual, as it was repeatedly exemplified in public gatherings by renouncing Masons during the Anti-Masonic furore, beginning in 1826a year before the prophet is alleged to have received the 'golden plates.' And be it remembered,*

*Joseph Smith lived within a few miles of the center of that excitement. And further, there were **exposes** and **innumerable pamphlets** and other **printed matter** dealing with this subject that were widely distributed in New York and adjoining states."*

The reader will remember that William Morgan's expose of Masonry was published in Batavia, New York, in 1827. Joseph Smith could have learned a great deal about the Masonic ritual from this book. We know now that

Heber C. Kimball had a copy of it, for his own daughter stated: "I remember once, when but a young girl, of getting a glimpse of the outside of the **Morgan's book exposing Masonry**, but which my father always kept locked up." (*Woman's Exponent*, XII, 126, as quoted in *Mormonism and Masonry*, by E. Cecil McGavin, page 99)

It is interesting to note that

Morgan's widow became a member of the Mormon Church and lived in Nauvoo. Heber C. Kimball's daughter stated: "In Nauvoo I was acquainted with the widow and daughter of Morgan who exposed Masonry." Fawn Brodie states:

*"The most famous woman in the church was **William Morgan's widow**, Lucinda, now married to George W. Harris, one of Joseph's key men, and incidentally a Mason of high rank." ([No Man Knows My History](#), page 301)*

Strange as it may seem,

Morgan's widow later became one of Joseph Smith's wives. Andrew Jenson, who was the Assistant LDS Church Historian, stated that she was "one of the first women sealed to the Prophet Joseph." (*Historical Record*, Vol. VI, page 233)

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The Mormon leaders find themselves faced with several embarrassing questions regarding the Temple ritual and Masonry. Many members of the Church wonder how they can believe in a secret Temple ritual, when the Book of Mormon condemns all secret societies, bands and oaths. In fact, it plainly states that "the Lord worketh NOT in secret combinations, . . ." (Ether 8:19)

Then, too, there is the question of why Joseph Smith would become a Mason. Besides all of the statements in the Book of Mormon which condemn secret societies, the reader will remember that Joseph Smith joined four others in stating:

*"We further, caution our brethren, against the impropriety of the organization of bands or companies, by **covenant, oaths, penalties, or secrecies**, . . . pure friendship, always becomes weakened, the very moment you undertake to make it stronger **by penal oaths and secrecy**." (Times and Seasons, Vol. 1, page 133)*

Benjamin F. Johnson claims that Joseph Smith told him that "Freemasonry was the APOSTATE ENDOWMENT." Why would Joseph Smith join an organization that was in a state of apostasy?

The Mormon leaders now claim that it is not right for members of the Church to join the Masons or other secret societies. Anthony W. Ivins, who was a member of the First Presidency, made this statement:

*"The Mormon Church has no quarrel with **Free Masonry** or any other organization which is formed for a righteous purpose.*

*It advises its members to refrain from identifying themselves with any secret, oath-bound society. . . . It is difficult to serve two masters and do justice to both. (The Relationship of "Mormonism" and Freemasonry, page 8)*

Joseph F. Smith, who became the sixth President of the Mormon Church, made this statement in 1900:

*"We have passed a resolution that men who are identified with these secret organizations shall NOT be preferred as bishops, or sought for as counselors; the same when it comes to selecting M.I.A. officers. The men who have done this have **disqualified** themselves and are **NOT FIT** to hold these offices." (Provo Enquirer, November 12, 1900, as quoted in Mormonism and Masonry, by S.H. Goodwin, page 76)*

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated:

*"The activities of the Church, in all departments, are **sacred, not secret**.*

*"This point of view makes it difficult for Latter-day Saints to look with favor upon **secret, oathbound societies**. The words of the Prophet Joseph Smith are sufficient answer to the*

question: (Note especially the last sentence.)

"And again, I would further suggest the impropriety of the **organization of bands** or companies,

by covenant or oaths, by penalties or secrecies; . . . Pure friendship always becomes weakened that very moment you undertake to make it stronger **by penal oaths and secrecy** (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 146).

"Many secret organizations may be actuated by high ideals. None, however, can transcend the ideals of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, from the point of view of encouraging people to walk uprightly they would seem unnecessary. . . . Sometimes they cause loss of interest in Church duties, for no one can serve two masters with equal interest. . . . Divided allegiance is always unsatisfactory and often dangerous." (Evidences and Reconciliations, pages 213-214)

It is interesting to note that the same Apostle who made these statements against secret societies had to turn right around and write a chapter entitled, "Why Did Joseph Smith Become a Mason?" He claimed that Joseph Smith joined the Masons **to win friends** among "the prominent and influential men of the state" so that the Church would not be persecuted, but he had to admit that "The attempt to win sufficient friends through Masonry to stop persecution **failed**." (Evidences and Reconciliations, Vol. 3, pages 114-117)

The reader will note that the Apostle Widtsoe has cited Joseph Smith's words about "the impropriety of the organization of bands or companies, by covenant or oaths, by penalties or secrecies" to use against secret societies. We feel that these same words could be used against the Temple ceremony. The Apostle Widtsoe, however, maintains that "

the temple endowment is NOT secret. All who meet the requirements for entrance to the temple may enjoy it." (Evidences and Reconciliations, Vol. 3, page 24) The Apostle Widtsoe's reasoning with regard to this matter is very poor. All secret-societies allow their **OWN members** to participate in their ritual. The Mormon Temple ceremony is kept secret from outsiders, and, after all, isn't this what makes a secret society? Furthermore, members of the Mormon Church who have Negro blood are not allowed to take their endowments, even though they can meet all of the other requirements for entrance into the Temple. [Web-editor: This changed after 1978 when a "revelation" was supposedly given giving blacks the priesthood. See [#39 Messenger](#)] Many members of the Church maintain that the Temple ceremonies are sacred and not secret. The Mormons, of course, have a right to believe that their ceremonies are sacred, but this does not excuse the fact that **they are secret**. They are just as secret as the ceremonies of any other secret society. We once heard a guide on Temple Square tell the people that the reason they couldn't go into the Temple was that soon everyone would want to go in, and they would not be able to perform their ceremonies with such a crowd coming and going through the Temple. This seemed to satisfy the people, but it was far from the truth. If the guide had been telling the truth, the Church would be willing to make films of the Temple ceremonies so that the people could see them without disturbing the work.

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They could not do this, of course, for the very nature of the ritual would prohibit such a production. In one part of the ceremony we read (see page 129 of this volume):

*" . . .we desire to impress upon your minds the sacred character of the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood, with its accompanying name, sign and penalty, together with that of all the other Tokens of the Holy Priesthood, . . .*

*They are most sacred and are guarded by solemn covenants and obligations OF SECRECY to the effect that under no condition, even at the peril of your life, will you ever divulge them except at a certain place that will be shown you hereafter. The representation of the penalties indicates different ways in which life may be taken."*

From this it is obvious that the Temple ritual is a secret, and John A. Widtsoe's statement that "the temple endowment is not secret" is completely false.

## CONCLUSION

Briefly summarized, the connection between Mormonism and Masonry is as follows:

1. Both Mormonism and Masonry have secret ceremonies that are performed in secret temples.
2. The 'Masonic emblems' are displayed on the walls of the Mormon Temple.
3. The Mormon Temple ritual is similar in many respects to that used by the Masons.
4. JOSEPH SMITH and many of the most prominent members of the Mormon Church were also members of the Masonic Lodge.
5. Temple ceremonies were actually performed in the Masonic Hall.

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[Go to "Masonic Symbols and the LDS Temple"](#)

[Go to Captain Morgan's \*Exposition of Freemasonry\*](#)

[Go to Online Resources](#)

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