

Editor Deseret News

The following ^{is a} synopsis of a debate held at "The old Well" Maury County Tenn - July 5th & 6th 1881 - between J. M. Morton of the "Christian" Church, & Hyrum Belnap of the Church of Christ of Latter day Saints -

1st day - Meeting opened by prayer by Elder Spence 10 a. m. - The chairman then arose, & after a few remarks by way of "salutatory" read the following proposition (viz) Is the "Book of Mormon", a book of divine inspiration - Affirmative, H. Belnap, Negative J. M. Morton - The Bible to be the only text book - Elder Belnap arose, & after greeting the audience, explained the nature of the discussion, & its origin saying ~~we were~~ he was on the defensive, & not in the aggressive - that he had been challenged to defend the principles of "life, & Salvation as - advocated by the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints" - read Isaiah 8th Chap - 20th vs, & desired the issue left to this decision explained the Book of Mormon as a being a history of a part of the "tube of Joseph", & their travels from the time they left Jerusalem (B. C. 600) - then proceeded to show by the Bible that this record was to come forth, & to prove that the "American Indians" are the literal descendants of "Joseph who was sold into Egypt" - read Gen 47th Chap - 22nd vs - Deut 33 - 13th to 17th vs - & explained very clearly that

his branches did run over the wall, & that
 these blessings have been verily fulfilled
 in the record of the aborigines of this continent
 as recorded in the book of Mormon - read the
 48th Chap of Gen - where Jacob blessed the
 two sons of Joseph, & promised that the "seed
 of Ephraim should become a multitude of
 nations in the midst of the earth," & very clearly
 proved that the Indians of this continent, are
 that seed - for they are in very deed a "multitude
 of nations" in the midst of the earth" - read the
 1 Chronicles 5th Chap, & 1st Ver - showing the change
 of birthright, & 1 Kings 12th Chap - 16 to 23 V - showing
 the secession of Judah & Israel, also 2 Kings
 18th Chap 9 to 11 V, showing the captivity of Israel
 & very lucidly explained by the following
 connected passages, the incontrovertible fact
 that the seed of Joseph^{se} on this continent
 16th Chap Isaiah 8 V, (that they had gone over
 the sea,) Jer 31st - 10 V, (that the gathering is
 promised) Eg^t 20-33 V, Hosea 10th - 9 V,
 Hab 2nd 2 V, (showing the vision is to be written
 on tables (plates) Hosea 9th - 11 V, Isaiah 45th
 Chap - 8 V, 85th Psalm, Isaiah 29th, said
 a people as Ariel, were to be brought down
 & should ~~be~~ speak^{out} of the ground; spoke
 of the sticks of Judah, & Joseph as recorded in
 37th Chap Eg^t - & explained them very
 plainly - spoke of the people on this continent

being the ~~few~~ "Other Sheep" that Jesus spoke of in John 10th - said (quoted) The Saviour was not sent, "but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, proving that the people on this continent - were of the "house of Israel" -

J. M. Morton - Rebutted the people in appropriate words - said if the Book of Mormon is a book of Divine inspiration, it was high time we began to heed its precepts - "If I can show it is not - we ought not to heed it - The Mormons are not the only people - (objection taken) & sustained, as a history of any people is not pertinent to the issue) - The book of Mormon is given us as the word of God, I have studied these prophecies - It will be remembered my Bro introduced all his proof only to strengthen, & confirm his first argument - read the blessing of Jacob on the head of Joseph, & said that they were fulfilled when Jacob went to Joseph in Egypt - as Joseph then proved himself to be a fruitful bough - by supporting & furnishing a home for him in the land of Goshen - he dwelt a great deal upon the 85th Psalm, - said the proof he had that Joseph had fulfilled the blessing as to him being a fruitful bough, was that Moses in reiterating the blessing left "a fruitful bough" off - He said the "Hills of Palestine are the "Everlasting Hills" spoken

of - He further said the last days spoken of
 in the old Testament only had reference to
 the last days of the Jewish dispensation -
 He wanted to know what time this man
 Lehi came to America, & he wanted proof
 of it - wanted to know if truth always
 meant a book, (truth shall spring out of
 the ground) quoted passages to show Jesus
 said "I am the truth" &c - Thy word is
truth &c - said Mr Belnap cannot prove
 truth means a book, in this instance, He
 then explained this prophecy in this wise
 Christ rose from the dead - hence "truth
 sprang out of the ground," said anything
 to spring out of the ground must do
 so of its own power, & will - & Christ did
 this, on the other hand Joseph Smith
 dug the plates out of the ground
 so they did not spring out of themselves
 "righteousness & truth are met together"
 he said John the Baptist is the
 righteousness that should "go before his
 face" (85 Psalm) - read the 15th Chap-
 of Matt - 8 & 9 - as a corroboration - said
 Mr Belnap is trying to deceive the people
 by misconstruing the Scripture -
 read 11th Romans - & said Paul applied
 this prophecy to the people of his day

1 Cor - "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise &c" - means to the Jews - The Book of Mormon does not fulfill this prophecy read Isaiah 29th, said the coming forth of the Book of Mormon - did reversed this prophecy, as he said the angel first delivered the plates to Joe Smith - said "It shall be as the words of a book - not a book - which men deliver to him that is learned, he said men did not deliver it for Martin Harris did it alone - said this prophecy does not in any way refer to the Book of Mormon as it was written on plates, & not on sticks, said it was a broken stick for it is a record of "two distinct peoples" - & said it was not joined to the stick of Judah & defied Mr Belnap to prove that the Bible is the stick of Judah, said he would not accept a broken stick, & the Book of Mormon is broken in 3 pieces - said the Bible is not a complete stick - as we only have a part of the books - said I think now I have answered every argument - He then commenced to prove from the Book of Mormon that - a great many contradictions occur which are sufficient to prove it is not a book of divine origin - he read where Alma prophesied Christ should be born in Jerusalem - he then said this is a

glaring contradiction as the bible says he shall
 be born at ~~Bethlehem~~ Bethlehem read
 several passages of scripture in proof of this -
 said - if he was already at Jerusalem, they could
 not "bring him there" - said another glaring
 contradiction was that the Book of Mormon
 counselled to pay a tithe of the tithing which
 was a 100th part - & the Bible only counselled
 to pay a 10th of all - another contradiction
 was that when Christ was crucified darkness
 fell upon the face of the land for a space
 of 3 hours - the Book of Mormon has the
 darkness about 15 days after it fell upon
 the Asiatic Continent - said that Nephi
 did build a temple, & ordained priests, as
 the law of Moses directs - when the Bible
 distinctly says none can be priests, but
 those of the tribe of Levi - & here it says
 they were taken from the tribe of Joseph -
 said they must be false priests - and will
 or would come under the same condemnation
 of the priests of Korah &c -

2 P. M. —

Meeting opened by prayer by Rev. Mr. Frazier
 Bro. Belnap read - from Gen 29th - Deut 33rd -
 85th Psalm - & explained these passages again
 John - 17 - "thy words are truth" - he went over
 the same ground as this morning - only he
 added a little more testimony - said the

gentleman had not read the scripture
aright - said the Book of Mormon is not
a broken stick, for Egypt says for Joseph
& his companions - & all the house of Israel
which will of course include the Jaredites
proved the Levites, did not alone hold the
priesthood - named a great many that held
the priesthood that was not of the house of Levi -
Said the prophecy of Alma read - That
Christ should be born at - (not in) Jerusalem
"which is the land of our fathers", this does
not mean at the city absolute, it means any
where in the land of Palestine -

J. M. Norton - said he was sorry he had given the Bro so
much to do, to answer his negation - that he
could not get up another prophecy - he said
the last days did not mean the end of the
world - but all the last days spoken of
in the ~~new~~ ^{old} testament - meant the end of the
Jewish dispensation - quoted Danile 2-44
to prove it - saying Daniel was forgetting
the Kingdom set up by Christ - & quoted
Paul to Timothy - In the last days perilous
times shall come - he said this meant
the times of the Jews, at the Saviors advent
he tried to prove that Joe Smith dug the
plates out of the ground - but failed -
He applied all the prophecies that
Bro Belnap - quoted, & read - as up to the

Jews - said Joe Smith did not take the
 plates to Prof Anthon - but sent a copy of
 them - Prof Anthon said he could not
 understand the hieroglyphics, they must bring
 him the plates - & he pronounced it all a
 hoax - he applied all the prophecies of
 the old testament to the Jews, & said that
 they are all fulfilled, & hence the Bible is
 of more effect - said the reason the Jews
 would not receive Jesus was that "they
 were teaching for doctrine the commandments
 of men" - said there was no need of Herod
 sending the ~~the~~ wise men to Bethlehem if
 Christ was at Jerusalem - he said there
 were two places in the vicinity of Jerusalem
 that was called the "City of David" - Beth ²⁰
 was so called from the fact that "David's
 father (Jesse) lived there - said another
 glaring contradiction consisted in The Book
 of Mormon stating that God did not
 confound the tongue of Jared at the
 tower of Babel - & the Bible says he did
 confound all the world - Another contradiction
 the bible says All the sons of Gedoniah
 were slain before his eyes - the Book of
 Mormon says, all were slain except - Mulek
 Bro Belnap here asked for 10 minutes to reply to
 this new matter but Mr Norton positively refused
 to grant it -

Wednesday July 6th 188

10 A.M. - Meeting opened by prayer by Eldon Spence
 Chairman read the proposition -
 Did the ^{doctrine & practice of the} Church known as the Christian Church
 (to which I belong) in accordance with the
 New Testament - scriptures -

The Bible to be the sole text book -

J. M. Moton said he was proud of the position he occupied
 as a preacher of the gospel - called attention
 to the name Christian, said he did not exclude
 any sect from that name - said it was a
 general name, & all the followers of Christ
 were known by that name - read the 62nd
 Chap Isaiah 3 & 4 - in support of the name
 Christian - quoted Paul before ~~Agrippa~~ Agrippa
 when the King said Thou almost persuadest
 me to be a Christian - he said "practices
 in the proposition had no reference to
 the every day life of the Church - for he was
 not willing to defend such practices -
 said he shall confine his opponent to
 rebut what he says, & not go to other sources
 for information - He said We believe in
 God, in Jesus Christ because all power is
 given to Him in Heaven & on Earth, we believe
 He is made perfect, & is the Author of our
 Salvation; We believe in the Mission of
 Jesus Christ, that grace & truth came by
 Him, read Heb 12 - said there is no
 true ^{religion} Church but without adversity - we believe

Jesus Christ sent His Holy Spirit (John 16)
 according to promise, we believe the mission
 was given to the world in a 3 fold manner
 (John 3) God gave not the Spirit to man by
 measure &c - 1st He came to the Apostles
 2nd to every disciple, & every man & woman
 that repented (Act 2-38) 3rd The Holy Spirit
 came in a Miraculous manner to the Apostles
 read (Mark 16) Signs &c - said I am
 going to show you that these signs are
 mentioned by Paul in 1 Cor 12 - Chap - among
 the "Spiritual Gifts" - 1st go to Act 2nd to
 show - a measure of the Spirit - like a "mighty
 rushing wind," we as a people do not claim
 to have this Spirit - in this measure to speak
 in tongues - read the 38th vs, said we
 believe & practice this - Peter did not promise
 them the whole measure of the Spirit (Gal 3)
 "Received ye &c" said faith, & gospel are
 synonymous words - read (Gal 3) said the
 Church of Christ is the body of Christ -
 said whenever a man is baptized he
 receives a measure of this Spirit - read
 (Act 2) when it reads - 3000 were added to them
 in one day, he said he had figured it out, & he
 found that this would allow 1 1/2 minutes to
 baptize each person, which could not be
 done if the Holy Ghost had to be conferred
 by the "laying on of hands" - he said it was

noon, by the time they had got through
 preaching - then they only had 6 1/2 hours to do
 the baptizing - 12 men - 250 each - said
 every man that complies with baptism has
 the Spirit conferred upon him - we believe
 in faith, repentance, we believe repentance is
 a godly sorrow - (John 3rd 5 v), read Christ's
 commission to his disciples - read (Romans 6)
 He said he was willing to receive the Scriptures
 for as they read, & not allow skeptics to
 interpret them for him - said no man ever
 laid hands on anyone for the gift of the
 Holy Ghost - but the apostles & defied any one
 to prove it - said the presence of an apostle
 is indispensably necessary to the "laying on
 of hands" - said the gifts fall on all of them
 are not given to them - said Simon "saw
 the power of the Holy Ghost -" & it was for this
 power that he offered the apostles money
 He said why don't the same power make
 itself manifest today, by tongues &c - the
 same cause always produces the same
 effect - said Phillip had not this power
 because he was not an apostle - or why did
 the apostles have to journey all the way to
 Samaria to perform it -

Bro Belnap - said with regard to name - the apostles
 were first called "Christians" at Antioch
 Latter day saints were first called "Mormons"

at Nauroo - Christian was a name given them
 by the Jews in derision read (1 Cor 14-) reads
 all the Church's of the Saints, & whenever any of
 the apostles or others of the Church of God had
 occasion to mention any of their names they
 always addressed them as Saints - said
 Saint was the title God always gave to them -
 He said if the "Christians" have the Church of
 God to day they must teach, & practice what
 was taught by Christ, & His Apostles - He then
 compared the Church as laid down in 1 Cor - 12
 Eph - 4 - & other passages - All things Jesus taught
 must be taught now - said the signs did
 follow the believers in that day, & do in every
 age of the world when Christ's Church is on
 the earth - read Rom 12 - Mark 16 - James
 5th - showing the duty of those that are sick
 & compared that to the teachings of today -
 read 1 Cor 12 - 1 - Cor - 11 - said Ananias
 laid hands on Paul for the gift of the Holy Ghost
 commented at length on (1 Cor 12) - showing the
 Officers in the Church - & ordinances - said
 God sets these officers in His Church - & he defied
 his opponent to show where they had been
 taken out - as it takes the same power to
 repeal a law it does to enact it - read
 (Eph 2 - 18v) said there was no is no half kingdom
 of God - said the Kingdom of God is the same
 to day as it ever was - read (act 2) & said

This promise is to all people in all ages - said Paul was not amongst the twelve apostles yet he laid on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost read (Matt 16) said God has not changed we must be led by "new revelation" spoke at length upon Authority - quoted from (Acts 6) - (Gal 1-8) (Rom 1-14) John 6-65) Heb 5) & defied any man to show when & where this order of things had changed

2 P.M. - Meeting opened by prayer by Rev. Mr. Frazer J. M. Minton - said it will be remembered that my

brother did not answer one of my arguments this morning, I said no man except an apostle ever laid hands on another for the reception of the Holy Ghost - after baptism - & I defy him to find a passage; If none but them had this power, when they passed away - & none other were appointed, this power must cease, If God did not fill up the vacancies, then must all pass away, read (James 5-) about sending for the Elders &c - said this was all right in that day as the gifts were then with the Church - He said my opponent can't find a place where the name saint is applied to the Church - but "if any man suffer as a Christian" ^(1 Pet. 4-16) this is the name applied He said any attack on his Church - is a direct attack on the scriptures, & I call upon him to answer the questions I put - Judas betrayed Christ, & another was put in his stead - why was not one put in the stead of James, & the others & which

Salvation - he only desired to speak according
 to the "law ^{and} the testimony" My opponent finds
 fault with me, for not answering his question
 I asked him to show me if there is any
 Authority in the Church to which he belongs
 Paul ^{and} he has not answered that question, Paul
 says (1 Cor 12) I would not have you ignorant ~~de~~
 I do not object to the name of Christian for I
 know all the followers after Christ were the Church
 of Christ - If I have the same Church today
 must I not have the same order - Saints in
 all ages of the world were, ^{and} are led by ~~the~~
 revelation - (John 6:65) (interruption by Mr Morton)
 (suppressed by the Chairman) read Phil 3 - not that
 I have ~~de~~ - (1 Cor 13) ^{and} said there are 4 things
 necessary for a Kingdom - 1st a King - 2nd
 Subjects, 3rd laws - 4th Officers to enforce those
 laws - Christ is the head to guide the body
 of the Church - (Acts 3) Repent, ^{and} be converted ~~de~~
 spoke at length on the restitution of all
 things - said all things must be restored to
 the earth again before the second coming
 of the Son of Man - read (Eph 1) Rev 14) Zeck
 2-4) Rev 10) Mark 9) 2 Thes 2) Jude 3 -
 Rom 13³) whosoever resisteth the power ~~de~~ -
 did the ancients all come to a unity of the
 faith - Paul only had a part, nor did the
 Church of his day - ^{and} when ~~the~~
 perfect is come, then that pa