

The Dead Sea Scrolls: Death Knell for Joseph Smith

These ancient texts completely invalidate Smith's claim that the Bible had been corrupted.

The Book of Mormon asserts that a "great and abominable church" corrupted the Bible, rendering it both distorted and incomplete. Joseph Smith was supposed to have corrected this problem by restoring the Bible to its original purity in his "Inspired Version" of the Bible, which is the official version of all RLDS/Community of Christ churches and break-away Restoration/Remnant groups. See this *brief* excerpt from of the Book of Mormon. (The entire rant against this "great and abominable church" is quite lengthy, 118 verses: 1 Nephi 3:139–256.)

¹⁶⁵And the angel of the Lord said unto me, Thou hast beheld that the book proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew; and *when it proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew it contained the plainness of the gospel of the Lord, of whom the twelve apostles bear record; and they bear record according to the truth which is in the Lamb of God:* ¹⁶⁶Wherefore, these things go forth from the Jews in *purity* unto the Gentiles, according to the truth which is in God: ¹⁶⁷And after they go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the foundation of a *great and abominable church*, which is most abominable above all other churches; ¹⁶⁸For behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; ¹⁶⁹And also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away. (1 Nephi 3:165–169, emphasis added)

The theory here is that a highly centralized and corrupt early Christian church systematically altered the text of the Old Testament, rendering it incomplete and unreliable. In my article entitled "Is the Bible Reliable?" I debunk the assertion that a single church hierarchy systematically altered over 5,000 copies of the Greek New Testament. And so we now turn to the issue of the reliability of the Old Testament, and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Discovered in the 1940s and 1950s, the Dead Sea Scrolls were the library of a separatist Jewish community at Qumran, created from roughly 200 BC to 50 AD, and containing portions of every Old Testament book except Ester. *And when these scrolls were compared to our present Old Testament, they were found to be nearly identical.* For example, when two copies of the Isaiah scroll were examined, "they proved to be word for word identical with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95 percent of the text...The five percent of variation consisted chiefly of obvious slips of the pen and variations in spelling" (Gleason Archer, *Old Testament Introduction*, p. 29). Please note the following observations.

- The Qumran community was *Jewish*, not Christian, and therefore could have had no connection with that "great and abominable church."
- The Dead Sea Scrolls *predate* the Christian era altogether, and therefore could not possibly have been subject to the corruption allegedly performed by that "great and abominable church."

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- Since the Dead Sea Scrolls were of Jewish origin, and predate Christianity, even the Book of Mormon acknowledges their purity, “Wherefore, these things go forth from the Jews *in purity* unto the Gentiles” (1 Nephi 3:165–169).
- The fact that the Dead Sea Scrolls are nearly identical to our present Bible demonstrates conclusively that the text was faithfully handed down to us; our present Old Testament is accurate and reliable.
- These ancient texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls contain virtually none of the text Joseph Smith inserted into his so-called “Inspired Version” of the Bible.
- Had the Book of Mormon assertion been accurate, the Dead Sea Scrolls would have actually *confirmed* the massive insertions Joseph Smith placed in his Inspired Version of the Bible, since these texts predate the corruption of that “great and abominable church,” and were therefore deemed “pure.”

The implications of this ancient discovery are *inescapable* and *devastating*: (1) One of the greatest contentions of The Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 3:165–169) is proven false, adding to a mountain of other evidence demonstrating that the whole book is fraudulent. (2) Joseph Smith’s so-called “Inspired Version” of the Bible is also proven to be fraudulent, having been betrayed by the ancient manuscripts *which actually should have confirmed it!* Could anything be more clear? Latter Day Saints need to come to grips with this stunning reality.

Joseph Smith could not have known that a hundred and twenty years later the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls would completely betray his entire work. But his followers now have the benefit of this wonderful discovery. Please pray with us that this information will help awaken them to the fact that Joseph Smith is indeed a false prophet. Only then will they be freed up to learn of the *real* Bible, the *real* Jesus and the *real* gospel. 🙏

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