

The Plagiarism Moves On: Uninspired LDS "Prophets" Cribbing for Christ

Posted by: **steve benson** ()

Date: November 10, 2016 01:20AM

The Mormon Church has a long tradition of its unoriginal and uninspired "prophets," "seers" and prevaricators stealing the writings, thoughts and ideas of others without giving proper and required attribution to original sources. The lineup of top-of-the Mormon pyramid plagiarizers in this pretentious regard includes:

--Mormon Church inventor and "prophet" Joseph Smith;

--Mormon Church "prophet" David O. McKay;

--Mormon Church "prophet" Ezra Taft Benson;

--Mormon Church "apostle" Bruce R. McConkie; and

--Mormon Church member of the "celestially-compassed" Seventy presidency and BYU president, Merrill J. Bateman.

And those are just a sampling of the ones who've been caught. If these Pirates of the Crib and Steal'Em 'were caught robbing from the writings of others for purposes of, say, doing a high school or college homework assignment, they'd face possible expulsion or other serious consequences. Plagiarizing in the name of "prophesy" doesn't get them off the hook. What it does is expose them as the bloviating phonies that they are.

In a now-closed thread, RfM poster "forbiddencokedrinker" rightly complains:

". . . [W]hy do the GAs feel it is OK to plagiarize their [General] Conference talks? They do it all the time. They will read a line out of a poem, or song with never quoting its source. Then, in the 'Ensign,' it is mysteriously sourced. Sometimes they will even quote whole lines out of books as if it were their own. Even as a TBM it used to make be uncomfortable."

(" . . . Why Do the GAs Feel It is OK to Plagiarize Their Conference Talks?," by "forbiddencokedrinker," on "Recovery from Mormonism" discussion board, 18 June 2012)

Along the same lines, a more recent post by RfM contributor "anon70" points to the non-prophetic problem of Mormon "apostles and prophets" cribbing their crap from non-credited sources:

". . . Mormons often misattribute quotes in favor of giving credit to apostles and prophets. My Facebook post is blowing up with a quote about 'our houses' being attributed to James Faust who actually was quoting Barbara Bush.

"Maybe it's human nature (not just Mormon nature) to give credit where it feels good or validates our beliefs, rather than giving credit to whom it belongs but I've seen this many times from my Mormon fb friends."

("Quotes...Trying Again," by "anon70," RfM discussion board, 9 November 2016)

Think of your favorite General Authorities' "revelatory" Conference talks and/or their "divinely-inspired" doctrinal writings. Check their referenced sources (if any), then think again. Much of their material comes in the form of recognizable retreads from uncredited sources or word-for-word shoplifting for sermons.

So that we can understand the nature of the crime being committed by "the Lord's anointed" thieves in their smash-and-grabs on the intellectual property of others, let's first define the term "plagiarism."

According to Yale University's "Center for Teaching and Learning":

"Plagiarism is usually defined as a discrete offense, a specific failure to give credit to a particular source. But it actually raises a much more fundamental question for writers: 'Where is my voice in this project?' . . .

"Plagiarism is the use of another's work, words, or ideas without attribution. The word 'plagiarism' comes from the Latin word for 'kidnapper' and is considered a form of theft, a breach of honesty in the academic community. Plagiarizers suffer serious consequences in Yale College—including suspension or expulsion from school. . . .

"But beyond the risk of penalties, there are urgent moral and intellectual reasons to avoid plagiarism. When you write for an academic audience, you're joining an ongoing conversation. When you plagiarize, you join that conversation on false grounds, representing yourself as someone you are not. What is more, the act of stealing another's words or ideas erases your voice. It may be difficult to think of yourself as making an original contribution in the context of a class taught by an expert. But every assignment is an invitation to add something new to the conversation sparked by the course. You cannot make an original contribution if you are not the owner of the words and ideas that you present.

"Plagiarism takes many forms, but it falls into three main categories: using a source's language without quoting, using information from a source without attribution, and paraphrasing a source in a form that stays too close to the original. There are variations on these categories

that you may not be familiar with, so see the Warning section for a fuller discussion of the rules and see the Fair Paraphrase section for a discussion of how to use a source's idea in your own argument.

"You must always make clear in your written work where you have borrowed from others—whether data, opinions, questions, ideas, or specific language. This obligation holds whether the sources are published or unpublished and whether they are in print or on the Internet. When in doubt, be sure to check with your instructor about how to acknowledge sources in your papers, especially since every academic discipline has its own conventions."

("What is Plagiarism?," in "Undergraduate Studies, Yale University, New Haven, CT, <http://ctl.yale.edu/writing/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism/what-plagiarism>)

How have Mormon Church "prophets" unprophetically and unapologetically plagiarized their way into the hearts and minds of the emotional and brainless? Let us count the ways.

And, in the process, let's see how these guys use lies to grry and get away with it, while depending on their true-believing sheep to hide from public view the evidence of their uninspired liftings for the Lord.

--Mormonism's Lack of Originality: From the Mouths of Its Living, Cribbing "Prophets"

EXHIBIT A: Solomon Spaulding Disguised as Joseph Smith

First and foremost, of course, among Mormonism's most persistent, prolific, non-prophet plagiarists was its charismatic charlatan and philandering founder, Joseph Smith (1805–1844).

Smith (with the conniving assistance of Sidney Rigdon) ripped off the fictional manuscript writings of Congregationalist minister Solomon Spaulding (1761–1816) for the purpose of creating the equally fictional Book of Mormon.

In his devastating expose' of Smith's theft of others' hard-earned intellectual property (driven by the fact that he had no honest intellect of his own), researcher Vernal Holley exposes the spawned-by-Spaulding connection:

"[There are] many similarities between Spaulding's 'Manuscript Story' and the Book of Mormon. These are not vague similarities also found in other adventure stories; they are unique only to the works in question.

"How many books exist that have the same story outline as the Book of Mormon? How many stories tell of a record being written by the ancestors of the American Indians and buried by them to come forth at some future time when other people inherit their lands? How many tell of the same worship ceremonies, cultural technology, seer stones, and give the same descriptions of their fortifications and war stories? How many novels tell of a white God person whose teachings brought about a long period of peace followed by a war between kindred tribes in which the losing people are exterminated? Many similarities in the literary style of the two works have also been identified including identical word combinations, and the geographical settings of the two stories appear to be in the same area?

"Most skeptical readers of Spaulding's 'Manuscript Story' encounter difficulty in recognizing similarities between it and the Book of Mormon because they expect it to be written in the King James style complete with sentences beginning with "And it came to pass" and personal names similar to those in the Book of Mormon. When they cannot find these elements, they may lose interest and find it difficult to complete even a first reading. The problem is compounded when the reader is not a veteran student of the Book of Mormon. For example, if the reader is unaware that Gazelem, the Book of Mormon servant of the Lord, possessed a seer stone, the Spaulding seer stone might be passed over as insignificant.

"I believe that anyone who carefully studies all the material in [my] report will see that a relationship does exist between Solomon Spaulding's unpublished writing, called 'Manuscript Story,' and the Book of Mormon. The only significant difference between the two story outlines is the inclusion of the romance between Prince Eleson and Princess Lamess in 'Manuscript Story.' There is no such romance in the Book of Mormon.

"All the same, [Hugh] Nibley's assertion that the similarities between the 'Manuscript Story' and the Book of Mormon 'add up to nothing' seems to me to be an unfair conclusion. I believe the application of Nibley's rule (the closer the resemblance, the closer the connection) leaves little doubt that a connection does exist between Solomon Spaulding's writing and the Book of Mormon.

"So the question remains: How did this relationship come about? And, was the unfinished Spaulding 'Manuscript Story'--or an enlarged version--used by Joseph Smith as the groundwork for the Book of Mormon?"

(Vernal Holley, "Book of Mormon Authorship: A Closer Look--A Comprehensive Study of the Similarities Between the Book of Mormon and the Writings of Solomon Spaulding," 3rd ed., revised and enlarged [Roy, Utah: Vernal Holley, publisher, 1992], pp. 71-72)

For striking examples of parallel word usages, storylines, names, geographic locales and other unconfessed plagiarisms, see:

-<http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/vern/vernP0.htm>

-<http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/vern/vernP2.htm#pg33>

-<http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/vern/vernP2.htm#pg28>

-<http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/vern/vernP1.htm#pg20>

-<http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/vern/vernP2.htm#pg27>

<http://sidneyrigdon.com/vern/Holley1.JPG>

<http://sidneyrigdon.com/vern/Holley2.JPG> and:

-Wayne L. Cowdrey, Howard A. Davis and Arthur Vanick, "Who Really Wrote the Book of Mormon?" (St. Louis, Missouri, 2005, <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0758605277/002-1638398-8090404?v=glance&n=283155>)

To borrow--with appropriate attribution--from the Mormon Church Primary song, "Book of Mormon Stories":

"Book of Mormon stories that I cribbed--here, look and see . . ."

EXHIBIT B: Benjamin Disraeli Disguised as David O. McKay

Mormon Church president David O. McKay (1873-1970) is perhaps best known for his oft-quoted couplet--which, come to find out, wasn't his after all:

"No other success can compensate for failure in the home."

(cited in J. E. McCullough, "Home: The Savior of Civilization,"[1924], p. 42; and <http://www.timesandseasons.org/?p=2252>)

McKay had, in fact, infamously ripped off that famous line from Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), a renowned British politician, novelist and essayist who said:

"No success in public life can compensate for failure in the home."

-<https://www.google.com/#q=disraeli+no+success+in+public+life>

Efforts by apologists for the Mormon Jesus to sweep McKay's plagiarizing practices under the rug have been conniving but catchable. Below is an earlier exchange I had on RfM with poster "Makurosu" regarding tracked evidence of attempts to cover McKay's unholy hind end, and about which I wrote the following:

"Wiki-warping Morgbots have been caught and exposed here on RfM trying to cover David O. McKay's plagiarizing tracks back to Benjamin Disraeli.

"The evidence seems to point quite clearly to TBM lurkers who are reading this board, spotting information that contradicts the Mormon myth and then altering other website sources to cover the acts of their thieving leaders.

"Consider this:

"In another thread, poster 'Makurosu' noted that Mormon Church president David O. McKay's statement, 'No other success can compensate for failure in the home,' wasn't original to McKay but, rather, was stolen from Benjamin Disraeli:

--Posted by "Makurosu"

Date: January 24, 2012

11:23 AM

Subject line: "The quote was lifted without credit from Benjamin Disraeli."

"'No success in public life can compensate for failure in the home.'

"I think Theodore Roosevelt quoted Disraeli first before the quote landed on the lips of David O. McKay.

"Hooray for Jesus."

I replied to "Makurosu," which led to an intriguing discovery by "Makurosu"--namely, that the McKay-cribbed quote from Disraeli (which I had mentioned and cited from "Wikipedia" in a previous RfM thread back on 11 April 2011) had subsequently vanished from that site.

The make-believe Mormon Lord works in wondrous ways, his plagiarisms to conceal.

Here's how "Makurosu's" discovery of possible TBM tampering with "Wikipedia" unfolded. In response to "Makurosu's" initial post, I replied:

--Posted by steve benson

Date: January 24, 2012

12:22 PM

Subject line: "Yes, indeed, David O. McKay had no success coming up with an original line. He plagiarized it."

"McKay ripped off that famous line from Benjamin Disraeli (1804–1881), a renowned British politician, novelist and essayist who said: 'No success in public life can compensate for failure in the home.'

"(Simran Khurana, 'Benjamin Disraeli Quotations: A Collection of Benjamin Disraeli Quotations')

"You've even got Mormons admitting McKay cribbed it:

"'My [LDS] church leaders repeatedly emphasized this teaching: 'No other success can compensate for failure in the home.' (Benjamin Disraeli as paraphrased by President David O. McKay).'

"('Green Oasis,' under 'Family First,' 5 July 2007, at:

<http://www.blakeclan.org/jon/greenoasis/tag/conscience/index.html>");

--Posted by "Makurosu"

Date: January 24, 2012

01:04 PM

Subject line: "Sounds like an epic fail for McKay in public life to me."

--Posted by steve benson

Date: January 24, 2012

11:31 PM

Subject line: "Sounds like Mormons riding the coattails of dead non-Mormons and not them giving credit."

"If Elohim can't inspire Mormonism's false prophets with their own revealed inspirational lines, simply steal quotes from deceased Gentiles and call it your own.

"To review the rip-off:

"David O. McKay (1873–1970) is perhaps best known for his oft-quoted little couplet (which, come to find out, wasn't his after all): 'No other success can compensate for failure in the home.'

"(cited on an official LDS website, from J. E. McCullough, 'Home: 'The Savior of Civilization' [1924], p. 42; 'Conference Report', April 1935, p. 116; and <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/presidents/controllers/potcController.jsp?leader=9&topic=quotes>; see also, Julie M. Smith, 'Book Review: David O. McKay: Beloved Prophet,' at 'Times and Seasons: 'Truth Will Prevail,' <http://www.timesandseasons.org/?p=2252>)

"McKay had, in fact, purloined that famous line from Disraeli, who said it before McKay did: 'No success in public life can compensate for failure in the home.'

"INTERESTING SIDENOTE: I previously found Disraeli's 'no success' quote on 'Wikipedia,' at http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Benjamin_Disraeli. Checking back there today, however, that quote is no longer on that site.

"Since one can go on to 'Wiki' and anonymously edit the articles of others, it does not seem beyond the realm of reasonable possibility that a true-believing Mormon (in an all-too-typical dishonest effort to keep McKay's mythological image as a 'prophet' intact) snuck into the 'Wiki' article and took it out."

At this point, "Makurosu" picked up a traceable fishy scent:

--Posted by "Makurosu"

Date: January 25, 2012

12:27 AM

Subject line: "According to 'Wayback' at Archive.org, it disappeared sometime between July 15, 2010 and May 14, 2011."

"Here's the July 15, 2010 snapshot:

http://web.archive.org/web/20100715203208/http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Benjamin_Disraeli

"As you can see, the quote is in the 'Unsourced' section. Only the quote has disappeared and not the 'Unsourced' section. It wasn't moved to the 'Misattributed' section, either.

"Here's the May 14, 2011 snapshot:

--http://web.archive.org/web/20110514030631/http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Benjamin_Disraeli";

--Posted by steve benson

Date: January 25, 2012

02:17 AM

Subject line: "Thanks. That's interesting (and perhaps not coincidental). I posted on McKay's plagiarism of Disraeli on 11 April 2011."

"'The Plagiarizing Moves On': In the Long LDS Tradition of Unoriginal & Uninspired "Prophets"-- Joseph Smith, David O. McKay, Ezra Taft Benson, Merrill J. Bateman & Bruce R. McConkie," posted by steve benson, "Recovery from Mormonism" bulletin board, 11 April 2011, <http://exmormon.org/phorum/read.php?2,163604,163836,quote=1>

"The now-vanished Disraeli quote was on 'Wikipedia' as of July 15, 2010, and read: 'No success in public life can compensate for failure in the home.'

-<http://web.archive.org/web/20100715203208/>

-http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Benjamin_Disraeli

-<http://web.archive.org/web/20100715203208/>

-[http://en.wikiquote.org\]](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Benjamin_Disraeli)/wiki/Benjamin_Disraeli

"It was gone from the same 'Wikipedia' page entirely by May 14, 2011 (33 days after my earlier RfM post appeared noting the McKay plagiarism of Disraeli):

-http://web.archive.org/web/20110514030631/http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Benjamin_Disraeli

"[To see and compare both 'Wayback' pages, click on the word 'Impatient,' located in the bottom-right corner]

"(The above exchange is found in the thread, 'No success outside the home,' posted by 'kolobian,' on 'Recovery from Mormonism' bulletin board, 21 January 2012, 01:33 PM, <http://exmormon.org/phorum/read.php?2,397412>)

"Makurosu" then caps it off with this 'smoking gun' discovery that a pro-Mormon rewriter may well have deleted the evidence of McKay's plagiarism of Disraeli from "Wikipedia" (as noted by "Makurosu" later down in this thread, inserted here):

--Posted by "Makurosu"

Date: January 25, 2012

10:12 AM

Subject line: "It's unfortunate that there was such a wide gap in the snapshots at Archive.org."

"I looked into the discussions at the 'Wiki' site to see if I could find a change log to pinpoint when the quote was deleted, but I don't know enough about the system. Maybe someone with better knowledge could look into it. It's certainly interesting.

–http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Benjamin_Disraeli";

--Posted by "Makurosu"

Date: January 25, 2012

10:25 AM

Subject line: "Never mind. I found it."

"Looks like you're right, Steve. The quote was deleted April 15, 2011--four days after the thread on RfM.

"Here's the action history:

–http://en.wikiquote.org/w/index.php?title=Benjamin_Disraeli&action=history

"It was removed by user 'Neutrality' with the comment 'rm misattributions.'

"Here's the revision log. See line 645. No explanation given for removing that quote.

–http://en.wikiquote.org/w/index.php?title=Benjamin_Disraeli&diff=1372320&oldid=1272023";

--I replied:

"So, in the end, some probable anonymous troll for the Mormon Cult removes from 'Wikipedia's' biography article on Disraeli the quote from Disraeli--instead of removing from the record McKay's plagiarism of Disraeli's quote.

"That says it all.

"Thanks for your diligent detective digging, 'Makurosu,' which raises the question: 'No success at perpetuating the Mormon myth can occur if evidence of possible TBM tampering with the trail of evidence is uncovered?

"Heh."

-<http://exmormon.org/phorum/read.php?2,409933,410030#msg-410030>; and:
<http://exmormon.org/d6/drupal/Are-TBM-Lurkers-Reading-This-Board>

To borrow--with respectful attribution--from Disraeli: No success can compensate for words that aren't their own.

Exhibit C: C.S. Lewis Disguised as Ezra Taft Benson

Among faithful Mormons, one of the most famous and appreciated talks credited to my grandfather/Mormon Church president Ezra Taft Benson was entitled "Beware of Pride."

As one Mormon commentator has declared:

"['Beware of Pride' is] [p]erhaps the best remembered of all Ezra Taft Benson's talks. . . . [M]embers from all over the political spectrum love and agree with him here. This talk is NOT controversial, but loved."

<http://www.zionsbest.com/top25.html>

Likewise, in a glowing obituary of my grandfather, the sermon was mentioned as follows:

"Continuing to help set the Church in order and perfect the Saints, he delivered another landmark address entitled 'Beware of Pride' . . ."

-http://www.lightplanet.com/mormons/daily/history/people/Benson_EOM.htm

(Actually, the sermon was not delivered by Ezra Taft Benson himself but, instead, read from the pulpit by First Counselor in the First Presidency Gordon B. Hinckley on 1 April 1989 during the Saturday morning session of the 159th Semi-Annual LDS General Conference:

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1989/04/beware-of-pride?lang=eng&r=1>).

Alas (and more importantly), beware of plagiarism. Compelling evidence exists indicating that his heralded "Beware of Pride" talk was anything but original. Not only was the sermon delivered by someone else, persuasive signs have surfaced that a person other than Ezra Taft Benson actually researched and wrote the talk. That individual's identity is known and will be disclosed below.

Further evidence also overwhelmingly supports the conclusion that the text of my grandfather's "Pride" talk was itself lifted, without clear attribution, from the writings of Christian writer and apologist, C.S. Lewis.

Hence, the assertion of admirers that "this talk is NOT controversial" is becoming less accurate as the facts surrounding its actual genesis become better known. The sermon is, in fact, controversial because much of it consists not of the actual words or ideas of Ezra Taft Benson, but of words and ideas which were stolen from others, researched by others, written by others and, in the end, delivered by others.

--The Lewis/Benson Connection

The following question was asked of me some years ago in this forum:

"Did ETB steal from C.S. Lewis? . . . The first time I read the C.S. Lewis passage, I nearly fell out of my (TBM) chair. ETB's talk as so clearly lifted in large part from Lewis and nary an acknowledgment to be heard. Usually such a gaffe by a well-known person gets a lot of coverage, and yet I have never heard . . . any admission or apology. What say ye? Any info?" ("Bobby D," "RfM" discussion board, 14 June 2003)

Likewise, another questioner followed up with a similarly direct inquiry:

"Was C.S. Lewis the author of the pride sermon from ET Benson? Where can that be found? Anyone know?" ("novel-t," "RfM" discussion board, 20 January 2004)

The answer is a definitive yes.

Significant portions of Ezra Taft Benson's pride sermon were directly lifted from, influenced by, and cobbled together from the writings of Christian apologist C.S. Lewis--specifically from his book, *Mere Christianity*, under the chapter of "The Great Sin"

(C.S. Lewis, "Mere Christianity," New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1952, revised and enlarged).

--The Proof: Line-Upon Line, Plagiarism Upon Plagiarism (to borrow from 2 Nephi 28:30, which itself was lifted by Joseph Smith from Isaiah 28:10, KJV)

A line-by-line comparison of the text of both documents provides clear and convincing evidence that a major source for Ezra Taft Benson's talk on pride was the earlier work of C.S. Lewis.

Moreover, this blatant and heavy borrowing, both in terms of wording and concept, was done without attribution.

Examples of these plagiarisms are listed below, by category.

--Pride is the Ultimate Vice

Lewis:

"The essential vice, the utmost evil, is Pride." (p. 109)

Benson:

"Pride is the universal sin, the great vice."

--The Competitive Nature of Pride

Lewis:

"Pride is essentially competitive--is competitive by its very nature . . ." (p. 109)

". . . Pride is essentially competitive in a way that other vices are not." (p. 110)

"Pride is competitive by its very nature." (p. 110)

"Once the element of competition has gone, pride is gone. That is why I say that Pride is essentially competitive in a way the other vices are not." (p. 110)

Benson:

"Pride is essentially competitive in nature. . . .

"Our will in competition to God's will allows desires, appetites, and passions to go unbridled."

--The Proud See Themselves Being Above Others

Lewis:

"A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you." (p.111)

Benson:

"Most of us consider pride to be a sin of those on the top, such as the rich and the learned, looking down at the rest of us."

--The Proud Also Look from the Bottom Up

Lewis:

"When you delight wholly in yourself and do not care about the praise at all, you have reached the bottom." (p. 112)

Benson:

"There is, however, a more common ailment among us and that is pride from the bottom looking up."

--Pride Equals Enmity

Lewis:

"Pride always means enmity--it is enmity. And not only enmity between man and man, but enmity to God." (p.111)

Benson:

"The central feature of pride is enmity--enmity toward God and enmity toward our fellowman."

"Our enmity toward God takes on many labels, such as rebellion, hard-heartedness, stiff-neckedness, unrepentant, puffed up, easily offended, and sign seekers."

"Another major portion of this very prevalent sin of pride is enmity toward our fellowmen."

--Pride and Self-Value

Lewis:

"You value other people enough to want them to look at you." (p. 112)

Benson:

"The proud depend upon the world to tell them whether they have value or not."

--Pride vs. Humility

Lewis:

"The virtue opposite to it [pride], in Christian morals, is called Humility." (p. 109)

". . . if you really get into any kind of touch with Him you will, in fact, be humble—delightfully humble, feeling the infinite relief of having for once got rid of all the silly nonsense about your own dignity which had made you restless and unhappy all your life. He is trying to make you humble in order to make this moment possible . . ." (p. 114)

Benson:

"The antidote for pride is humility . . ."

"Choose to be humble. God will have a humble people. Either we can choose to be humble or we can be compelled to be humble."

--Pride Not Admitted in Self

Lewis:

"There is one vice of which no man in the world is free; which everyone in the world loathes when he sees it in someone else; and which hardly any people, except Christians, ever imagine that they are guilty themselves." (pp. 108-09)

Benson:

"Pride is a sin that can readily be seen in others but is rarely admitted in ourselves."

Only once in ETB's sermon was proper credit given to C.S. Lewis as a source:

"The proud make every man their adversary by pitting their intellects, opinions, works, wealth, talents, or any other worldly measuring device against others. In the words of C. S. Lewis: 'Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man. . . . It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. Once the element of competition has gone, pride has gone.' ('Mere Christianity' [New York: Macmillan, 1952, pp. 109–10].)"

--The Identity of the Individual Who Researched and Wrote Ezra Taft Benson's "Beware of Pride" Sermon

Several years ago, I visited with May Benson (daughter-in-law of Ezra Taft Benson and wife of now-deceased Reed Benson, Ezra Taft Benson's oldest child), in their home in Provo, Utah, during which time the subject of pride and my grandfather's sermon on the matter was a focus of conversation.

The first occasion was prior to the public delivery of Ezra Taft Benson's sermon by Gordon B. Hinckley in the April 1989 General Conference and the second visit took place after the speech.

May said that she had very strong feelings about the subject of pride. She was especially offended and concerned with what she regarded as the Benson family's own problems with pride. (In fact, she said she had gotten up in disgust and walked out of a wedding breakfast for my sister Meg, when one of the daughters of Ezra Taft Benson, Beverly Benson Parker, as she was listening to the father of the groom, Cap Ferry, make some remarks to the assembled, leaned over and whispered self-righteously to others at the table, "Well, we know which family was blessed with the spirituality").

May said she had put together quite a few thoughts on the subject of pride that she hoped someday to compile and publish in a book.

However, after my grandfather's "Pride" sermon was delivered, May said that she no longer felt it necessary to publish her hoped-for book. Why? Because, she said, her husband, Reed, had spoken with Ezra Taft Benson about her research on the topic. May was clearly indicating that her information and study efforts had been used in crafting my grandfather's sermon on pride.

However, the true extent of May Benson's involvement in that effort was not shared with us by her and did not become evident until sometime later. Reliable sources in Provo subsequently informed me of rumors that May herself may have worked on Ezra Taft Benson's sermon. This I was able to later confirm directly from a credible source inside the Benson family who knows

May quite well, who was familiar with the situation and who wishes to remain anonymous. The source told me in a face-to-face meeting that May Benson, daughter-in-law of Ezra Taft Benson through marriage to his son Reed, traveled to St. George, Utah, where over a period of several weeks "she wrote his talk."

--Finally Giving Credit Where Credit is Due

It appears that those responsible for the production and delivery of Ezra Taft Benson's "Beware of Pride" sermon were themselves too prideful to acknowledge the following facts:

--(1) the sermon was largely plagiarized from the earlier works of noted Christian writer, C.S. Lewis;

--(2) the sermon was actually ghost-written by a woman, May Benson, doing Mormon Church-assigned research on the talk for its uninspired Mormon "prophet;" and

--(3) the female who wrote the talk (May Benson), wasn't given credit by the man who was falsely said to have composed it (Ezra Taft Benson), nor by the other man who actually delivered it (Gordon B. Hinckley, ETB's first counselor in the First Presidency).

Nonetheless, to borrow from the Mormon hymn, "Praise to the Man":

"Praise to the man who depends on a woman."

Too bad they won't give them credit.

Oh, and speaking of credit, the actual tune for Mormondumb's eulogy to its assassinated polygamous ladies' man and charlatan, Joseph Smith--known and sung to this day as "Praise to the Man"--was itself taken from a well-known Christmas carol, "Star in the East" that was written in 1811 by Reginald Heber.

This was acknowledged by W.W. Phelps, a former Mormon "traitor" who eventually repented/made up with Joseph Smith and then rewrote the song's lyrics for Mormon-hymning purposes--all in honor of Smith after he was killed in an unsuccessful Masonic-cry-for-help jailbreak attempt at Carthage, Illinois.

However, before Phelps could even come up with the notion of twisting the tune for Mormon purposes, William Walker published it in his 1835 edition of the Christian/non-Mormon "Southern Harmony," an important and popular songbook of its day,

In addition to starting out as a Christmas carol, the song was also based on the melody from a Scottish folk song, "Martyr," which itself was derived from another tune, "Scotland the Brave"--

the latter considered to be one of several unofficial national anthems of the Scottish people.

The song was eventually published anonymously by the Mormons (meaning it was ghostwritten by Phelps), appearing in the August 1844 issue of "Times and Seasons," nine years after it had been published in Walker's own hymnal.

-<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8iuqOOL49Mo>

-https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJ5aAinuE_M

-https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Praise_to_the_Man

-https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Star_in_the_east.png

-https://www.hymnwiki.org/Southern_Harmony,_1835

-<https://www.hymnwiki.org/Martyr>

-<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSH0eRKq1IE>

-http://www.losthymnsproject.com/14_Texts/Praise_to_the_Man.pdf

Jesus Joseph Smith Christ. Mormon "prophets" (or at least their office staffs) have been keeping themselves busy all these years ripping off non-Mormon producers in order to "praise to the man who cribs stuff for Jehovah."

EXHIBIT D: Gertrude Himmel Disguised as Merrill J. Bateman

At a Sunstone Symposium a few years ago, LDS author Bryan Waterman critically noted the "reliance" of BYU President and member of the Seventy Presidency Merrill J. Bateman (1936-) "on the work of [academic conservative] Gertrude Himmelfarb (1922-)"

-<http://www.lds-mormon.com/31076.shtml>

Actually, Waterman was being polite. Bateman's "reliance" more like blatant plagiarism.

On 25 April 1996, incoming president of BYU Bateman delivered his inaugural address to the student body assembled in the Marriott Center, entitled "Response to Change."

What it turned into was a reaction to rip-off.

Curiously, the BYU website where Bateman's shamelessly-lifted speech was at one time posted, is no longer has it available there. Efforts to link to it lead to this dead-end message:

"Oops! [IE] could not connect to fc.byu.edu

"Suggestions:

" • Go to byu. edu

" • Try reloading: [now taken-down site]

" • Search on Google"

Specifically, Bateman was accused of seizing--without attributing the source of his stolen good--portions of his remarks from an article published earlier the same year, authored by conservative philosopher Gertrude Himmelfarb, entitled, "The Christian University: A Call to Counter Revolution."

("First Things," no. 59, January 1996, pp. 16-19,
<http://www.leaderu.com/ftissues/ft9601/articles/himmelfarb.html>)

The plagiarism accusations generated an uproar in academic circles, with back-into-a-corner Bateman steadfastly denying the charges. The complaints against him were eventually reprinted some years later in a retrospective article appearing in the Mormon Church-owned "Desert News," in conjunction with the end of Bateman's tenure as BYU president:

"Brigham Young University President Merrill J. Bateman . . . sent a letter to a neo-conservative scholar denying that he plagiarized her work in his inaugural address. An anonymous BYU faculty member made that charge last week."

-<http://www.deseretnews.com/article/508472/Y-PRESIDENT-WRITES-SCHOLAR-DENIES-PLAGIARIZING-HER-WORK.html>

Once caught, Bateman claimed that he did not plagiarize Himmelfarb, while admitting to a BYU campus audience in August 1996 that, although he hadn't cribbed his suspect speech, he nonetheless had committed an "I'm-sorry" offense:

"I apologize for the ambiguity and inattention that created the confusion. The attribution could and should have been clearer. I promise to be more careful in the future."

[-https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/merrill-j-bateman_mission-brigham-young-university/](https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/merrill-j-bateman_mission-brigham-young-university/)

Nice try, Merrill-Over-a-Barrel.

Observe below how he went to torturous lengths in trying to explain way his plagiarism-driven speech, one which ironically included the subtitle, "Maintaining High Standards":

"Before discussing with you the plans for the future, I wish to address the charges levied against me two weeks ago by one or more members of our academic community. The charge of plagiarism is serious in any context but especially in an academic setting. The charge appeared in the media on the day of summer commencement. I learned about it one day earlier. Unfortunately, my schedule for three days did not provide time to address the problem adequately. In the time that elapsed, a number of concerns weighed heavily on me. May I share them with you.

"The first concern was for Ms. Gertrude Himmelfarb, the person innocently drawn into the controversy. It was her intellectual property at the center of the accusation. Reference was not made to her work in the public address, but her article was cited in the printed version. Was the citation adequate? Once I had time to review the printed version of the speech plus Ms. Himmelfarb's article and realize that her work had been cited but an ambiguity existed, I spoke with Ms. Himmelfarb by telephone and sent her a letter containing an apology for the incident and an explanation.

"The second concern was for the reputation of the university and its members. Had I been so careless as to quote from another person's work without due recognition? Even if inadvertent, that is not the standard I wish to live by or the operating standard at this institution. The standard of truthfulness required of all members of this community is of the highest level. Anything short of our best efforts in this regard is not acceptable. In particular, my performance must be exemplary.

"With regard to this second concern, I reflected on the care one must take in referencing the work of others. All departments at the university stress the importance of academic integrity in preparing documents that draw on outside sources. Intellectual property is as real as real property. I know that. In the past I have meticulously tried to give credit where appropriate. My philosophy in preparing talks or articles has been that it is better to buttress one's own arguments with the well-reasoned position of a recognized authority. Consequently, I was shocked by the plagiarism charge.

"The charge was made known to me Wednesday morning, August 14. At the time, I had only a few minutes to examine the material. The sentences from my address were displayed in a table. They were disjointed and appeared to be without attribution. The speech was four months old,

and only faint shadows of its construction remained in my memory. As stated earlier, the absence of attribution was unusual because I know the rules and have tried carefully to follow them. In a public address it is sometimes cumbersome to note every attribution, but my printed versions have always included appropriate citations. Unfortunately, the schedule for the next three days left no time to examine my speech or Himmelfarb's article, given the responsibilities associated with commencement and other meetings.

"On Saturday morning I examined the speech and its construction. As I read the address, I immediately realized what had happened. What had been presented in the accusatory article as disjointed sentences without attribution were consecutive sentences in one paragraph plus the first part of a second. At the end of the first paragraph is an appropriate citation. What confused the accusatory author was that the citation directly followed a short phrase placed inside quotation marks. The quotation marks created the ambiguity as the critics assumed that the reference to Ms. Himmelfarb referred only to the short phrase when it referred to the preceding sentences in the paragraph. Two other sentences summarizing Himmelfarb's points begin a new paragraph one sentence later. Initially they were part of the sequence in the preceding paragraph with the appropriate citation. When a Dostoyevsky statement was inserted toward the end of the paragraph, these two sentences were put in the next paragraph. An op. cit. was inadvertently omitted.

"I am grateful that 'The Chronicle of Higher Education' carefully reviewed the anonymous charge, saw the sequential sentences, and noted that a citation followed. Their comment on this matter is as follows:

"After paraphrasing Ms. Himmelfarb in six sentences, Mr. Bateman did cite Ms. Himmelfarb's article. He placed the citation after the last of the paraphrases, "The slogan is 'everything is political.'" Ms. Himmelfarb had written, "Everything is political,' the popular slogan has it."

"('Brigham Young's President Accused of Plagiarism in Inaugural Speech,' 'The Chronicle of Higher Education,' News Update, Friday, 16 August 1996, website)"

Bateman continued:

"'The Chronicle' published their comments on the web on Friday, August 16. I read their statement the following Monday, two days after the letter for Ms. Himmelfarb was prepared.

"I apologize for the ambiguity and inattention that created the confusion. The attribution could and should have been clearer. I promise to be more careful in the future."

That's a mighty fine story, that is, until one actually compares Bateman's inaugural address with Himmelfarb's article--an investigative approach that indicates that Bateman was, well, shall we say, not exactly telling the truth.

Here's why:

Although the manuscript copy of Bateman's 1996 inaugural address offered a single footnote reference to Himmelfarb's ideas (which was located on p. 18 of her article), Bateman failed in the spoken version of those remarks to acknowledge his reliance on Himmelfarb's ideas--thus, leaving the false impression that her words were his own.

A point-by-point, topical comparison of the Himmelfarb and Bateman texts raises serious questions about Bateman's intellectual honesty:

*On Disparaging Truth, Knowledge and Objectivity

Himmelfarb:

"Today many eminent professors in some of our most esteemed universities disparage the ideas of truth, knowledge, and objectivity as naive or disingenuous at best, as fraudulent and despotic at worst."

"Above all, it is the truth that is denigrated."

"Finally, and most disastrously, the university, liberated from religious dogma, has also become liberated from the traditional academic dogma, the belief in truth, knowledge, and objectivity."

Bateman:

"During the past two decades, however, a number of well-known educators have begun to denigrate truth, knowledge, and objectivity."

*On Politicization of the University by Interest Groups

Himmelfarb:

"It [the university] is also a highly politicized institution; no longer subject to any religious authority, the university is at the mercy of the whims and wills of interest groups and ideologies."

Bateman:

"The university becomes a politicized institution that is at the mercy and whims of various interest groups."

*On the Secularization of the University and Its Hostility to Religion

Himmelfarb:

"For we are now confronted with a university . . . that has almost totally abandoned its original mission. It is now not merely a secular institution but a secularist one, propagating secularism as a creed, a creed that is not neutral as among religions but is hostile to all religions, indeed to religion itself."

Bateman:

"If university scholars reject the notion of 'truth,' there is no basis for intellectual and moral integrity. Secularism becomes a creed that is no longer neutral but hostile to religion."

*On the Rise of Radical Relativism

Himmelfarb:

"The animating spirit of postmodernism is a radical relativism and skepticism that rejects any idea of truth, knowledge, or objectivity."

Bateman:

"The driving theory is a radical relativism and skepticism that rejects any idea of truth or knowledge."

Before giving his woefully under-attributed speech, perhaps Bateman should have reviewed BYU's own Honor Code. This document on Integrity 101 has the following to say about academic standards:

"The first injunction of the BYU Honor Code is the call to 'be honest.' Students come to the university not only to improve their minds, gain knowledge, and develop skills that will assist them in their life's work, but also to build character. 'President David O. McKay taught that character is the highest aim of education' ('The Aims of a BYU Education,' p. 6). It is the purpose of the BYU Academic Honesty Policy to assist in fulfilling that aim.

"BYU students should seek to be totally honest in their dealings with others. They should complete their own work and be evaluated based upon that work. They should avoid academic

dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms, including but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, cheating, and other academic misconduct.”

Bateman then went on to a third concern of his in his speech: that of being ratted out by anonymous accusers.

(Note: If you worked as a Mormon Church–paid employee at BYU--as did fired BYU church history professor D. Michael Quinn--you might have some appreciation of Quinn's description of BYU as being the "Auschwitz of the mind," Given the lay of the land, it would not be surprising if whistleblowers on campus are inclined to lay low and opt for cover:

<http://signaturebookslibrary.org/on-being-a-mormon-historian/>)

Nonetheless, Bateman attacked his non–identified critics as follows:

"A third concern was and is for a few members of our community who feel the need to hide behind the cloak of anonymity. This is an open university [???], and I pledge to maintain that atmosphere. Reasonable men and women will differ in their views, but there are established procedures for resolving differences. Heads of departments, deans, and the administration have an open–door policy. The Faculty and Administrative Advisory Councils are additional forums for discussion. The administration has had brown bags with the faculty and staff in the past and will continue to do so. My door is always open, as many of you know."

Then Bateman pulled the Christ card:

"The Savior also provided a formula for resolving differences. He said:

"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' [Matthew 18:15–16]

"Within the university, anonymous letters regarding faculty or staff are ignored and returned to the person cited. Signed letters are given to the dean, department head, and appropriate faculty or staff for your information and discussion."

Bateman proceeded from there to criticize Mormons who had engaged in the anti–Church crime of verbalized public thinking, thereby trying to have it both ways:

"Five years ago the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve issued a statement counseling members not to participate in symposia where presentations injure the Church or are not appropriate ("Church Leaders Issue Statement Counseling Members," Public

Communications Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 23 August 1991). I believe the publication of an anonymous article by a symposia group denigrating members of the Twelve and advocating the transformation of BYU into a secular university supports the wisdom of that statement."

Now it was time to bring in big guns for the beleaguered Bateman. Like any good power-mongering Mormon authority figure who couldn't give a flyin' fig leaf apron about leaning on a Liahona for direction, fellow Blue Suit Boyd K. Packer (who today is unable to intervene from six feet under) rode to Bateman's rescue with a divinely-sounded call of vengeance.

A few months after exposure of Bateman as a clunky and unconvincing plagiarist, Packer launched what was seen by many as a thinly-veiled attack against any and all of Bateman's Mormon critics. At October 1996 General Conference, in a sermon unsubtly entitled, "The Twelve Apostles," Packer warned:

"Some few within the Church, openly or perhaps far worse, in the darkness of anonymity, reproach their leaders in the wards and stakes and the Church, seeking to make them 'an offender for a word,' as Isaiah said. To them the Lord said, 'Cursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed, saith the Lord, and cry they have sinned when they have not sinned before me, saith the Lord, but have done that which was meet in mine eyes, and which I commanded them.

"But those who cry transgression do it because they are the servants of sin, and are the children of disobedience themselves . . .

"Because they have offended my little ones they shall be severed from the ordinances of mine house.

"Their basket shall not be full, their houses and their barns shall perish, and they themselves shall be despised by those that flattered them.

"They shall not have right to the priesthood, nor their posterity after them from generation to generation.'

"That terrible penalty will not apply to those who try as best they can to live the gospel and sustain their leaders. Nor need it apply to those who in the past have been guilty of indifference or even opposition, if they will repent and confess their transgressions, and forsake them."

-http://www.lightplanet.com/mormons/conferences/96_oct/Packer_Apostles.htm

For those concerned about fake prophets of God like Packer coming to the rescue of other fake Mormon prophets like Bateman, they can rest assured that any LDS leader whom Packer defends

probably has done something wrong.

(Organ music, please--borrowed, with proper credit from Mormonism's famous radio broadcast program, "Music and the Spoken Word"):

"Music and the Stolen Word"

--An Unknown Arab Poet Disguised as Bruce R. McConkie

In eulogizing the by-then-dead Apostle/Fossil Bruce R. McConkie (1915-1985) at a BYU fireside, member of the First Quorum of the Seventy John K. Carmack offered this glowing tribute to Bruce the Prophetic Plagiarizer--who, while alive, had compared the Mormon Church to a steady-as-she-goes caravan moving forward into the eternal realms of glory.

Crowed Carmack:

" . . . [A]s an expression of his confidence in the Church, and as a seer whose words light the pathway we must travel as we endure to the end of that path, Elder McConkie saw the road ahead and the kingdom as a moving caravan triumphantly moving to its destiny."

Carmack was borrowing his in-memorial caravan image from an earlier McConkie sermon entitled "The Caravan Moves On." Not to be outdone by anyone, McConkie had lifted his caravan metaphor (without attribution) from an old Arab proverb. Having purloined his Christly caravan imagery from ancient Arab lore, he, of course, didn't have to give credit to anybody because, thus saith the Lard, he was an Apostle of the Lard and, as such, wasn't obligated to give credit to anyone if he didn't want to--especially if they were a lowly, anonymous, lost-in-the-sand-dunes-pf-time Arab.

McConkie's sermon (which appeared in the November 1984 issue of the "Ensign") likened critics of the Mormon Church to dogs yapping at the heels of the caravan of believers it plodded ahead, undaunted and undeterred by apostate hounds of hell barking in the rear.

Declared McConkie in solemn, ripped-off rhetoric:

"The Church is like a great caravan--organized, prepared, following an appointed course, with its captains of tens and captains of hundreds all in place.

"What does it matter if a few barking dogs snap at the heels of the weary travelers? Or that predators claim those few who fall by the way?

"The caravan moves on.

"Is there a ravine to cross, a miry mud hole to pull through, a steep grade to climb? So be it. The oxen are strong and the teamsters wise.

"The caravan moves on.

"Are there storms that rage along the way, floods that wash away the bridges, deserts to cross, and rivers to ford? Such is life in this fallen sphere.

"The caravan moves on.

"Ahead is the celestial city, the eternal Zion of our God, where all who maintain their position in the caravan shall find food and drink and rest.

"Thank God that the caravan moves on!

"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, men."

-<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1984/10/the-caravan-moves-on?lang=eng&r=1>

No doubt, Bellowing Bruce thought he was being amazingly and profoundly dramatic with his dog story. Come to find out, his caravan storyline has been a popular go-to image for centuries to illustrate all kinds of points of view, with McConkie's anti-dog doctrine being just one of them.

In fact, the popularity of this well-known, time-worn Arab proverb was illustrated when Russian President Vladimir Putin was mentioned in a news article as "recit[ing] a long list of Russia's economic accomplishments during his presidency, dismissing foreign critics of Russia's worthiness for Group of Eight membership with a proverb: 'The dog keeps barking, but the caravan moves on.'"

-<http://smh.com.au/news/world/hamas-must-change-now-putin-warns/2006/02/01/1138590568294.html>

But be it far from McConkie to give thanks to some insignificant, brown-skinned Arab. Instead, McConkie took the glory unto himself, although he still has not been named, even in death, as the proverb's grand originator--for the simple reason he'd already been beaten to the punch on that score.

-<http://www.wiseoldsayings.com/wosdirectoryd.htm>

<http://sand1.wordpress.com/2009/03/17/108-the-dogs-bark-but-the-caravan-moves-on-arab-proverb/>

Old myths about allegedly inspired Mormon leaders die hard. (As they say, never let the facts get in the way of a good prophet).

The sad thing is, the sheep don't even know they're being fleeced by said "prophet."

In a talk delivered at a Brigham Young University-Idaho Devotional, entitled "Obedience to the Commandments of the Lord," Kim B. Clark soberly invoked the non-original words of the non-inspired McConkie to create a bizarre stage scene:

". . . I would like to marry Nephi's metaphor of the iron rod and the straight and narrow path to another image given us by another prophet, seer, and revelator in our day. I think in so doing we may see new dimensions of the journey and gain deeper understanding of what we must do to obtain eternal life.

"The metaphor I have in mind was given to us by Elder Bruce R. McConkie in a talk he gave in General Conference in the fall of 1984." [Editor's note: No, Sister Clark, it wasn't. It was given to you by an Arab, but go ahead, anyway].

"Let's listen to Elder McConkie:

"The Church is like a great caravan--organized, prepared, following an appointed course, with its captains of ten and captains of hundreds in place.

"What does it matter if a few barking dogs snap at the heels of the weary travelers? Or that predators claim those few who fall by the way?

"The caravan moves on.

"Is there a ravine to cross, a miry mud hole to pull through, a steep grade to climb? So be it. The oxen are strong and the teamsters wise.

"The caravan moves on.

"Are there storms that rage along the way, floods that wash away the bridges, deserts to cross, rivers to ford? Such is life in the fallen sphere. The caravan moves on.

"Ahead is the celestial city, the eternal Zion of our God, where all who maintain their position in the caravan shall find food and drink and rest.

"Thank God that the caravan moves on!"

[-http://www.byui.edu/Presentations/Transcripts/Devotionals/2005_08_30_ClarkK.htm](http://www.byui.edu/Presentations/Transcripts/Devotionals/2005_08_30_ClarkK.htm)

In fact, Mormonism's go-to gems of plagiarized truth are Spaulding, Disraeli, Lewis, Himmelfarb, and an unknown Arab proverb writer.

Now is the great day of their power over Mormon "prophets," who would be nowhere without them.

Edited 3 time(s). Last edit at 11/10/2016 04:13AM by steve benson.

**Re: The Plagiarism Moves On:Uninspired LDS "Prophets"
Cribbing for Christ**

Posted by: **saucie** (
Date: November 10, 2016 12:56PM

"The church of latter day Plagiarists"

www.exmormon.org
Recovery from Mormonism